The Annotated Open

1981 U.S. OPEN
PALO ALTO

Jim Marfia

The Annotated Open

1981 U. S. Open Chess Championship

Palo Alto, California

by

JIM MARFIA

U. S. Tournament Series No. 2

1981

CHESS ENTERPRISES, INC.

CORAOPOLIS, PENNSYLVANIA

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ISBN 0-931462-13-4

Editor: B. G. Dudley

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I owe great and grateful thanks to my new bride, Barbara, who has learned very quickly, and borne very graciously, the lot of the Chess Widow.

Photos on pages 13, 15, 29, 40, 41 and 79 by Stella Monday; the rest were taken by the author.

And finally, thanks to my publisher, Bob Dudley, whose idea this was in the first place.

Royal Oak
October 1981

The Site

If you consider the annual U S Open a nice way to spend your allotted two weeks' vacation, then it would be hard to find a better spot for the U S Open than Palo Alto, California: a fair-sized city, one of a number of suburbs encircling San Francisco Bay. The tourist attractions of the Bay Area - Fishermen's Wharf, the Golden Gate, the cablecars, the Napa wine region - all this has been extensively detailed in one travel brochure after another, and do not need my poor pen in addition.

Palo Alto itself is chiefly known for Stanford University - my residence for the Open - and consequently for the Stanford Linear Accelerator, more popularly known as "atom-smasher" - which I visited (impressive). Palo Alto is not, however, the home of the Hyatt Palo Alto: that's in Los Altos, another suburb located a few miles south along El Camino Real.

The Hyatt Palo Alto, our host for the 1981 U S Open, is a chic, well-groomed, modern edifice; it looked elegant and expensive (it was: $50 a night!), quite in keeping with the Bay Area, in general. In fact, if I were asked to summarize my impressions of the Bay Area, I would say: nice place to visit, but I couldn't afford to live there. Modest homes start at about $100,000, and the Mercedes seems to be the favored mode of transportation, even with Germany half a world away.

For those whose pocketbooks weren't up to the Hyatt style of living, the U S Open organizers had, as usual, secured a list of more reasonable accomodations, including rooms at Stanford University, one of the most beautiful campuses I've ever seen. The main playing hall was reasonably well-lit, air-conditioned, and large; this last point was especially important, in view of the near-record turnout.

The Tournament

A large number were expected to attend this Open, and quite a few did in fact show up. The wallcharts showed 711, but this was clearly wrong, since many of the numbers had no players listed after them! Isaac Kashdan's LA Times column, appearing some weeks later, put the number of those entered at 694; this is also misleading, however, since a number of those had only a single forfeit zero after their name, and no further results – indicating that they had never showed up.

In search of this and a few other facts, I went to the trouble of copying down, name by name by rating by state, every player who actually played in the Open – right down to poor Astvaldur Eydal, who lost his first game (and got it published in the bulletins!) and promptly withdrew – coming up with what I believe to be the only accurate count: 662 players. It's also interesting to note that the vast majority of these were from the host state, California: 450, or fully 70%.

Topping the list were six GMs : the Rumanian Florin Gheorghiu, Larry Christiansen, James Tarjan, Peter Biyiasas, Andrew Soltis, and Arthur Bisguier. There were also four IMs: Sergey Kudrin, Kamran Shirazi, Nick deFirmian, and John Grefe; and one FIDE Master, Doug Root; and also two IWMs, Diane Savereide and Ruth Haring. Including these players (except Haring, whose current rating falls below 2200), there were 67 rated Masters in the Open; there were also 137 Candidate-Masters. With a current rating of 2187, I was among the latter group, ranked 76th.

The direction of this mammoth event was in the hands of a ten-man crew. Ted Yudacufski was Chief TD, assisted by: John Sumares (organizer), Alan Benson, Hans Poschmann, Robert Gordon, Romona Sue (Chessty) Wilson, Jim Hurt, Bill Bates, Naomi (The Fox) Yudacufski, Francisco (The Pen) Sierra, and Amada Sierra. Like most TD crews confronted with their first national tournament, they did yeoman work, making over 300 pairings a day for two weeks (in addition to a myriad other chores) with nary a word of complaint.

Not that the event went off flawlessly: that would have been inhuman! Most of the time, the TDs seemed to have their heads on reasonably straight; at other times, however, a curious

sense of propriety reigned.

Take, for example, those wallcharts. As already noted, they contained dozens of superfluous names and numbers; they were also set out upon the walls in curious, almost haphazard fashion: the first twelve charts or so on Wall A, then the next twenty across the hall on Wall B; then catercorner back to Wall A, and finally finishing up on Wall B again. And yet, somebody (Francisco Sierra, to be exact) took the infinite trouble to do all 700 or so names on those charts calligraphically!

And then there was the matter of the upper boards. At the US Open, it is customary to separate the top ten boards or so in some fashion from the rest of the Open; this is done to free the Masters of the crowding and noise that inevitably attends the rest of us, and thus to aid their concentration. Hopefully, this will permit them to produce beautiful, brilliant games. So that we can see these games in vivo, their moves are usually reproduced on demonstration boards.

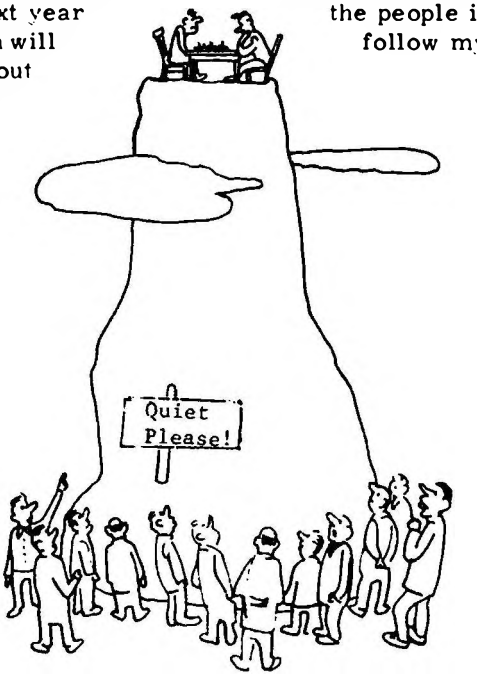
At Palo Alto, the top ten boards were cordoned off behind a rather flimsy rope barrier; unfortunately, only two demonstration boards could be found, apparently, in northern California. The net effect produced was rather the opposite of that intended. Starting from about the fifth round, when the GMs' opposition got tougher and the games got more interesting, the spectators, unwilling to miss what they'd paid to see, began to crowd the ropes in large numbers, particularly during the onset of time-pressure. Particularly unfortunate was the fact that the ten roped-off boards were in close proximity to the door of the playing hall, behind which was the wallchart. Starting about the third hour of play, a buzz of conversation began around the charts, which sometimes reached prizefight proportions. I was frequently able to hear it from my rather lowly board; it must have been maddening to the players trying to concentrate at the top.

That such conditions should exist, not at your local weekend Swiss, but at the U S Open itself, does more than just point up what I consider an unfortunate characteristic of most chessplayers - namely, their incivility; it points up a particular failing of the organizing committee. For there was a solution.

When U S Opens are booked into big hotels, the organizers are provided a large main playing hall, and also several smaller rooms, for the meetings that take place over the two weeks of the Open, for skittles, for the TDs' work, and for overflow. One large, well-lit, reasonably quiet room near the swimming pool was apparently intended for meetings and overflow; but although I saw meetings held there, I saw almost no players, ever - and what players there were played on the bottom few boards.

If I had been running the Palo Alto Open, I would have put the top ten boards in there, plus the demos, plus maybe forty spectators' chairs. But I wasn't running it, was I? Well, maybe next year the people in Saint Paul, Minnesota will follow my suggestion. Or how about this idea (from "64" magazine)

?



And now, on to history -

The 1981 U S Open !

The U S Open

Palo Alto, 1981

Round One

There being a great number of higher-rated players entered in the 1981 U S Open, the break point - that is, the top player in the bottom half of the scoretable, whose fortune it would be to play his first U S Open game against a Grandmaster - came at some point just over 1800. That meant a rating difference of just over 800 points; it also meant that very few games from this round would be of much interest - except, that is, to the lower-rateds. True, they didn't put up much opposition (although certainly some of them must have remembered last year's unforgettable first-round upset of an IM on one of the top boards); but I'm sure they came away with some invaluable firsthand lessons in the art of Master chess.

And some of the games were at least amusing:

Fred I Smith (1785) - GM Arthur Bisguier (2515)

1 Nf3 d5 2 h4 Nc6 3 g3 e5 4 d3 Bg4 5 Bg2 f5 6 Bg5 Qd7 7 c3 h6 8 Be3 Nf6 9 Nbd2 Bd6 10 Nf1 f4 11 gf ef 12 Bd4 Nxd4 13 Nx d4 c5 14 Nf3 0-0-0 15 a4 Rhe8 16 Nh2 Bf5 17 a5 Re7 18 a6 b6 19 b3 Rg8 20 d4 g5 21 hg hg 22 dc bc 23 c4 g4 24 Nd2 f3 (0-1)

Jose Marcal (2279) - George Cunningham (1773)

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 f4 e6 7 Bd3 Nc6 8 Nf3 b5 9 e5 b4 10 Ne4 Nxe4 11 Bxe4 d5 12 Bd3 Be7 13 0-0 0-0 14 Qe1 Bb7 15 f5 Kh8 16 f6 gf 17 Qh4 f5 18 Ng5 (1-0)

One first-round story that didn't surface until considerably later concerned a certain A-player who was very near the break point, but fell just over it - that is, instead of playing Gheorghiu, he played his first-round game against some weakie far down in the pack. And wouldn't you know it - he complained that he'd been "deprived of his incentive"! You better believe it - the TDs get blamed for everything!

I like scanning the wallcharts, as soon as they're up, for the unusual name. Palo Alto's charts were not lacking: the inimitable Flash O'Fiasco, Rice & Wheat (the Kellogg's Twins?),

and Gosling - h'mm : wonder if he plays Bird's Opening?

*

Round Two

- and more of the same: although the opposition on the top boards got a little stiffer, the GMs just kept mowing them down.

GM Florin Gheorghiu (2653) - Pedro Marcal, Jr (2027)

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 Nf3 cd 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 g6 6 e4 Nxd4 7 Qxd4 d6 8 Be3 Bg7 9 f3 0-0 10 Qd2 Qa5 11 Rc1 Bd7 12 c5 Bc6 13 cd Rfd8 14 Nb5 Qxd2+ 15 Bxd2 Bxb5 16 Bxb5 Rxd6 17 Bb4 Rb6 18 a4 a6 19 Ba5 Re6 20 Be2 Nd7 21 Rc7 b6 22 B b4 Nc5 23 Bxc5 bc 24 Bc4 Re5 25 0-0 Bh6 26 f4 (1-0)

Some GMs have made certain offbeat moves their trademark: one thinks of Larsen and his RPs, Hort and Nd2. GM Soltis has concentrated, apparently, on making N4e2 an irresistible force against the Sicilian.

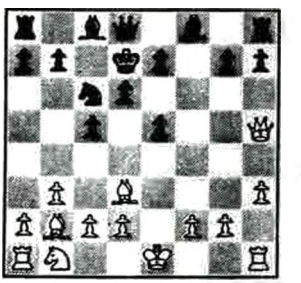
GM Andrew Soltis (2523) - A J Goldsby (2009)

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Nge2 g6 4 d4 cd 5 Nxd4 Bg7 6 N4e2 Nf6 7 g3 0-0 8 Bg2 d6 9 0-0 Bd7 10 h3 Rb8 11 a4 a6 12 Nd5 b5 13 ab ab 14 Be3 Nxd5 15 ed Na5 16 Bd4 Bxd4 17 Nxd4 e5 18 de fe 19 b3 e5 20 Ne2 Qc7 21 Qd2 Nb7 22 Nc3 Rfc8 23 Nd5 Qd8 24 f4 Bf5 25 Ne3 Qb6 26 Kh2 Be6 27 f5 gf 28 Nxf5 Bxf5 29 Rx f5 Rc7 30 Rafl Qc5 31 Bd5+ Kh8 32 Rf8+ (1-0)

Kamran Shirazi came to this country about three years ago from Teheran - no need to ask why! He brought with him a highly original approach to opening theory - and, probably as a consequence of this, an almost preternatural ability to squirm out of tight spots.

P Vacheron (2018) - Shirazi (2525)

1 e4 c5 2 b3 Nc6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 e5 Ng4 5 Bb2 f6 6 h3 Nxe5 7 Nxe5 fe 8 Bd3 d6 9 Qh5+ Kd7 (See Diagram)



Position after 9..Kd7

Would you care to play Black's position to win?

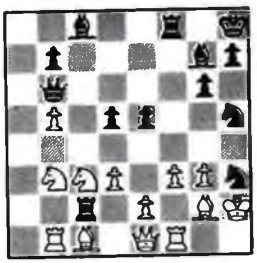
10 Nc3 Nb4 11 Bf5+ Kc7 12 Be4 g6 13 Qf3 Bh6 14 a3 Nc6 15 Nb5+ Kb8 16 a4 a6 17 Na3 Rf8 18 Qg3 Bf4 19 Qh4 d5 20 Bf3 h5 21 Be2 Rh8 22 f3 Nd4 23 Bxd4 cd 24 Qf2 h4 25 Kd1 Bf5 26 Bf1 Qd6 27 Kc1 g5 28 Kb2 Rc8 29 Qe2 Qb4 30 Rd1 Rc6 31 g4 hg 32 h4 d3 33 cd Rb6 (0-1)

Another young superstar who seems to relish "life in the fast lane" is Dmitri Gurevich, a former Muscovite who now makes his home in the Bronx. The difference between him and Shirazi is that Gurevich produces his cliffhangers from perfectly normal openings.

Norman Miller (2009) - Dmitri Gurevich (2466)

1 c4 g6 2 g3 Bg7 3 Bg2 Nf6 4 Nf3 0-0 5 0-0 d6 6 Nc3 Nc6 7 d3 e5 8 Rb1 a5 9 a3 Nd4 10 Nd2!? Ne6 11 b4 ab 12 ab Nh5 13 b5 f5 14 Bd5?! Kh8 15 Nb3 Ng5 16 Bg2 f4 17 Ne4 Nh3+ 18 Kh1 c6 19 Qe1 cb 20 cb Qb6 21 f3 fg 22 hg Ra2 23 Kh2 d5 24 Nc3 Rc2 (Diagram)

Despite White's early inaccura - it would appear that Black has bitten off more than he can chew. In fact, as Dmitri freely admitted to me later, he was "probably lost" after the simple 25 Bxh3. Watch White settle for something "simpler" - and get bombed out of the game!



Position after 24.. Rc2

25 Na1? Rxc3 26 Qxc3 e4 27 d4 g5 28 fe Nf6 29 Kh1 de 30 Ba3 Re8 31 Qc5 Qe6 32 Qd6 Qf7 33 Rbc1 Qh5 34 Rxc8 Nf4+ 35 Kg1 Nxe2+ 36 Kf2 Rxc8 37 Bc5 Nc3 38 Qe6 e3+ 39 Kg1 Ne2# (0-1)

Of course, you don't have to be a Senior Master to exploit complications successfully.

Roy Gobets (1878) - Arthur Wang (2135)

1 Nf3 g6 2 c4 Bg7 3 g3 e5 4 d4 ed 5 Nxd4 d5 6 Bg2 dc 7 e3 c6 8 Nc3 Ne7 9 0-0 Nd7 10 Qa4 Nb6 11 Qa5 Ned5 12 Rd1 Nxc3 13 bc Nd5 14 Nxc6! Qxa5 15 Nxa5 Nxc3 16 Ba3! Nxd1 17 Rxd1 Bg4

18 Nxb7 Rc8 19 Bc6+ Bd7 20 Bxd7+ (1-0)

Nor is it absolutely necessary to complicate, in order to win. Grandmaster Peter Biyiasas apparently likes his complications only on the football field. His moves seem almost too safe - but by golly, they do win.

GM Peter Biyiasas, **winning**

GM Peter Biyiasas (2527) - Richard Roloff (2025)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bb5 Bb4 5 0-0 0-0 6 d3 d6 7 Bxc6 Bxc3?!

See? This line is just so safe-looking for Black, nobody bothers to learn the equalizing line 7..bc 8 Ne2 Re8 9 Ng3 d5 etc., which still leaves a lot of play in the position. The text attempts to equalize by symmetry, which "everyone knows" should fail, thanks to White's extra tempo. Well, maybe "everyone knows" that - but it takes a GM to prove it!

8 Bxb7 Bxb2 9 Rb1 Bxb7 10 Rxb2 Bc6 11 Bg5 h6 12 Bh4 Rb8 13 Rxb8 Qxb8 14 Bxf6 gf 15 Nh4 Bd7 16 f4 Qb6+ 17 Kh1 Kg7 18 h3 Rh8 19 fe fe 20 Qh5 Be6 21 Nf5+ Kf8 22 Nxh6 Rh7 23 Qg5 (1-0)

Harry Bell (1975) - Armando Acevedo (2276)

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 b6 4 Nf3 Qd7 5 c3 Ba6 6 Bxa6 Nxa6 7 Qe2 Nb8 8 Nbd2 Ne7 9 Nf1 c5 10 Ne3 Ng6 11 g3 Nc6 12 0-0 Be7 13 Ng2 0-0 14 h4 f5 15 h5 Nh8 16 Nf4 Rac8 17 Be3 Nf7 18 Kg2 cd 19 cd Ng5 20 Nxg5 Bxg5 21 Rfd1 Bxf4 22 Bxf4 h6 23 g4 fg 24 Qxg4 Kh8 25 Be3 Rf5 26 Rac1 Rcf8 27 Rd2 Na5 28 b3 Rc8 29 Rdc2 Nc6 30 Qg6 Ne7 31 Rxc8+ Nxc8 32 Bxh6 gh 33 Qxh6+ Kg8 34 Qg6+ Kf8 35 h6 Rf7 36 h7! Rxh7 37 Qxh7 Ne7 38 Rc3 Qb5 39 Qh8+ Kf7 40 Rh3 (1-0)

Round Three

The inexorable laws of the Swiss pairing system bring the top-rated Masters ever higher-rated opponents; this round, it was the turn of the Grandmasters to play 2150's.

Back in'79 the Delegates, in their wisdom, chose to supplant the existing nomenclature below Master rank with something .. sexier. Experts became Candidate-Masters, followed by Category I, II, III, etc. Well, it may be just my opinion, but I've always noticed a significant difference between the play of the CM's rated below 2100 and those rated above 2100. I think of players rated below 2100 as good Cat-I's; CM's rated over 2100, on the other hand, seem almost to sense the magic 2200 rating just past their reach. They play with a sort of extra edge, almost as if, being 'only' CM's, they have to try harder.

Some of them did try harder in this round - at least, the half-points given up by Gheorghiu and Christiansen to CM's Orfalea and Tomey were the first breaks in the wall of GM perfection.

Mark Orfalea (2153) - Gheorghiu Benoni

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 g6 4 Nc3 d6 5 e4 Bg7 6 Nf3 0-0 7 h3 a6 8 a4 e6 9 Bd3 ed 10 ed Re8+ 11 Be3 Nbd7 12 0-0 Nh5 13 g4!? Nhf6 14 Qd2 h5 15 g5 Nh7 16 h4 Ne5 17 Nxe5 Bxe5 18 Bf4 Qd7 19 Bxe5 Rxe5 20 f3 Qh3 21 Qh2 Qxh2+ 22 Kxh2 Bf5 23 Ne4 f6 24 gf Bxe4 25 Bxe4 Kf7 26 Ra3 Nxf6 27 Rb3 Nxe4 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

You decide whether you would have taken the draw from a GM in that final position!

By contrast, the other top-board draw was a long drawn-out affair, requiring some fast footwork by Black in the endgame.

Larry Christiansen (2630) - Mike Tomey (2150) Sicilian

1 c4 c5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nc3 Nc6 4 d4 cd 5 Nxd4 g6 6 e4 Bg7 7 Be3 Ng4 8 Qxg4 Nxd4 9 Qd1 Ne6 10 Rc1 Qa5 11 Qd2 d6 12 Bd3 Bd7 13 0-0 Nc5 14 Bb1 Na4 15 Bd4 Bxd4 16 Qxd4 0-0 17 Nd5 Qd8 18 e5 Bc6 19 Rfe1 Bxd5 20 cd Nb6 21 e6 Rc8 22 ef+ Rxf7 23 Be4 Qf8 24 g3 Rxc1 25 Rxc1 Qg7 26 Qd2 Qf6 27 f4 e5 28 de Qxe6 29 Re1 Re7 30 f5 Qe5 31 Re2 Qc5+ 32 Kg2 d5 33 Bd3 Rxe2 34 Qxe2 Qd6 35 h4 Kf7 36 Qf2 Qf6 37 b3 g5 38 hg Qxg5 39 Qe2

Qf6 40 Qh5+ Kg7 41 Qe8 Qd6 42 g4 Qf4 43 Qe7+ Kg8 44 Be2 Qe4+ 45 Qxe4 de 46 Kg3 h6 47 Kf4 Nd5+ 48 Kxe4 Nc3+ 49 K d3 Nxa2 50 Kc4 Kg7 51 Bf3 b6 52 Kb5 Nc1 53 Bd5 Kf6 54 b4 a5! 55 ba ba 56 Bc4 h5! ($\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$)

White will be left with the wrong-color RP; Black doesn't even need his knight.

On the other high boards, alas! - the CM's did not fare quite so well. In our next encounter, for example a long-drawn-out war of maneuver went to the one with the stronger nerves.

Robert Ciaffone (2151) - CM James Tarjan (2623) Sicilian

1 Nf3 c5 2 c4 Nf6 3 Nc3 Nc6 4 d4 cd 5 Nxd4 e6 6 g3 Bc5 7 Nb3 Be7 8 Bg2 0-0 9 0-0 d6 10 e4 a6 11 Qe2 Rb8 12 Rd1 Qc7 13 Bf4

If you think this looks familiar, you're right: by means of yet another transposition, the ol' Hedgehog rears its head.

13 ... Ne5 14 Nd2 b6 15 Rac1 Bd7 16 b3 Rbc8 17 Nf3 Qb8 18 a4 Rfd8 19 h3 Bc6 20 Nd4 Bb7 21 Be3 Re8 22 f4 Nc6 23 Nc2 Nd7 24 e5 Red8 25 ed Bxd6 26 Ne4 Be7 27 Nd4 Nb4 28 Kh2 Qa8 29 Bg1 h6 30 Re1 Nc5 31 Nxc5 bc

Now White embarks upon a combination which unfortunately has a gaping hole at the end of it.

32 Nxe6? fe 33 Qxe6+ Kh8 34 Bxb7 Qxb7 35 Qxe7 Rd2+ 36 Re2 Qxe7 (oops!) (0-1)

Peter Biyiasas demonstrated once again the art of "doing nothing, and doing it very well."

William Abbott (2140) - Biyiasas Ruy

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Bxc6 dc 5 0-0 f6 6 d4 ed 7 Qxd4 Qxd4 8 Nxd4 c5 9 Ne2 Bd7 10 Nbc3 0-0-0 11 Be3 Bd6 12 Rad1 Ne7 13 Nf4 b6 14 f3 Be5 15 Nfe2 Rhe8 16 f4 Bd6 17 Ng3 Bc6 18 Rde1 Ng6 19 Nf5 Bf8 20 Bc1 b5 21 Ng3 c4 22 Kf2 Bb4 23 Re2 Bc5+ 24 Be3 Bd6 25 Kf3 Ne7 26 Kf2 b4 27 Nb1 c3!

What's this? After twenty-odd moves of aimless-looking maneuvers, suddenly White is lost! (threat: Bb5)

28 Rd1 Bb5 29 Ree1 cb 30 Nd2 Ng6 31 Kf3 c5 32 Nf5 Bf8 33 Nb1 a5 34 a3 Ba4 35 ab Rxd1 36 Rxd1 Bxc2 (0-1)

Nick deFirmian had a curious game: going quite far into a book line supposed to be very good for White, he was the first to deviate (15 Nd5, instead of 15 Qh5, is what's given), after which his attack seemed to bog down. Once Black traded queens, however, the endgame turned rapidly in favor of the Master.

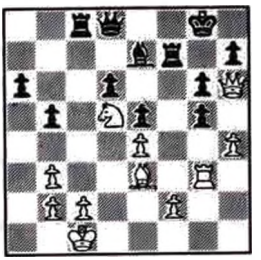
Nick deFirmian (2512) - Paul Tanenbaum (2125) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 d6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Be3 Be7 8 Qe2 0-0 9 0-0-0 Qc7 10 Bb3 a6 11 g4 Nxd4 12 Rxd4! e5?!

"Not recommended" by Nikitin. But wait ten moves, and then tell me whose position you like better!

13 Rc4 Qd8 14 g5 Nd7 15 Qh5!? b5 16 Rxc8 Rxc8 17 Rg1 Nc5 18 Rg3 Nxb3+ 19 ab g6 20 Qh6 f6 21 Nd5 fg 22 h4!? Rf7

There's an old saw that reads (in part): "If you can't bedazzle 'em with brilliance, befuddle 'em ..." I suspect White was engaging in a bit of the latter here. I see nothing more than a draw after 22 .. gh 23 Rxg6+ - or was Paul scenting IM blood, and going for the full point?



Position after Rf7

23 hg Qa5 24 c3 Qa1+ 25 Kc2 Qf1
26 Qh3 Qxh3 27 Rxh3 Rcf8 28 Kd3
Bd8 29 Ke2 Kg7 30 Rh1 Rf3 31 b4 a5 32 Nf6! Bxf6 33 gf+ R8xf6 34 ba h5 35 a6 Rf8 36 Ra1 R3f7 37 Ra5 Ra8 38 a7 h4 39 Rxb5 g5 40 Rd5 g4 41 Rxd6 h3 42 Rd1 Kg6 43 Ra1 Rc7 44 Kf1 Rc6 45 Kg1 Rd6 46 Kh2 Rc6 47 Kg3 Kh5 48 Ra5 Re6 49 b4 Ree8 50 Ra6 Rh8 51 b5 Raf8 52 b6 Rf3+ 53 Kh2 Rxe3?! 54 fe Rd8 55 a8Q Rd2+ 56 Kg1 g3 57 Qe8+ Kg4 58 Qe6+ Kf3 59 Qf5+ (1-0)

The reigning U S Women's Champion checked in with a fine attacking game, out of a sharp theoretical opening.

Ed Frumkin (2029) - Diane Savereide (2230) English

Watson gives 13 Be3! as White's best, while ignoring 13..f6 in favor of three other choices!' It doesn't seem to matter: Black just gets too good an attack for the pawn.

1 c4 c5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 d5 4 cd Nxd5 5 Bg2 Nc7 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 0-0 e5 8 d3 Be7 9 Nd2 Bd7 10 Nc4 0-0 11 Bxc6 Bxc6 12 Nxe5 Be8 13 Be3! f6!? 14 Nf3 Bc6 15 Nel Kh8 16 d4 Nd5 17 Nxd5 Qxd5 18 f3 Rad8 19 Nc2 Qh5 20 Qel f5 21 Rdl f4 22 Bf2 Rd6 23 Kg2 Rh6 24 Bgl fg (0-1)

Another U S Women's Championship participant, Pam Ford, also turned in an excellent performance this round (maybe it was Ladies' Day?)

Marfia (2178) - Pam Ford (1995) Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ed cd 4 c4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Nf3 Bb4 7 a3? B xc3+ 8 bc 0-0 9 Bd3 dc 10 Bxc4 Qc7! 11 Qd3 b6 12 Bg5 Nbd7 13 0-0 Bb7 14 Rfel Rac8 15 Ba6 Bxa6 16 Qxa6 Nd5 17 Racl Qc4 18 Qxa7?! Rc7 19 Nd2 Qd3 20 Qa4 h6 21 c4 hg 22 cd Rxcl 23 R xcl Qxd2, and Black won easily in a dozen moves (0-1, 35)

Another top player who found it very rough going tonight was young Senior Master Paul Whitehead, who came out of semi-retirement to play in the Open. He was rusty, and it showed:

P Whitehead(2403) - Robert Gardina (2104) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 Be2 Bg7 7 0-0 Nc6 8 Nb3 0-0 9 Khl a5 10 a4 Be6 11 Bg5 Rc8 12 f4 Qb6 13 Bh4 Rfe8 14 Bb5 Red8 15 f5 Bxb3 16 cb Qd4! 17 Qe2 Ne5

Black won't miss the two bishops: his pieces are centralized, and he holds sway over the central dark squares. He stands quite well already, and White's efforts to change that fact rebound on his own head.

18 Radl Qb4 19 fg hg 20 Bxf6 Bxf6 21 Nd5 Qxb3 22 Qd2 Rc2 23 Qxa5 Rdc8 24 Nxf6+ ef 25 Rxd6 Qxb2 26 Rd8+ Kg7! 27 Qb6 Ng4! 28 Qd6 Rxd8 (0-1)

The U S Open is also the time when the business of the USCF is scheduled for its annual look-see by the Delegates - first at the workshops throughout the middle week, and then at the Del-

egates' meeting over the middle weekend. The Delegates themselves begin to roll in around Tuesday - that is, starting with the third round or so - to check on the election results, get in on some of the workshops, and generally to mess around. We players generally paid them scant attention, except to help circulate the more pertinent rumors - such as where next year's U S Open would be. The most persistent (and ultimately factual) rumor turned out to be St. Paul, Minnesota. There was also a rumor that the Ratings people were gonna do something about the inflationary spiral in - prize funds? memberships? No, in the ratings. That rumor was also confirmed by the end of the Open : something about a "k-factor reduction", which I trust USCF will explain in its magazine.

Doug Root is a West Covina "Whiz Kid", who has, perhaps, been attracting less attention than some of his contemporaries, such as Christiansen, Youngworth and deFirmian. Part of the reason may be his shyness (the picture at right is the first that I have ever seen that includes his face), and some may have to do with the nature of the chess he plays. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Doug has a penchant for small, safe endgame advantages, which he can nurse to victory with absolutely mindbending patience.

Doug Root, concentrating

Keith Vickers (2105) - Doug Root (2443) K-Ind Reversed

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 b5 3 Bg2 Bb7 4 0-0 e6 5 d3 c5 6 b3 Be7 7 Bb2 d6 8 Nbd2 Nbd7 9 e4 0-0 10 Qe2 a5 11 h4 a4 12 Ng5 a3 13 Bc1 Ne5 14 f4 Nc6 15 N2f3 h6 16 Nh3 Nh5 17 Kh2 f5 18 Bd2 Qe8 19 ef ef 20 Rae1 Bf6 21 Qe6+ Qxe6 22 Rxe6 Rad8 23 Rfe1 Nb4 24 Bx b4 cb 25 Nf2 Bd5 26 R6e3 Bc3 27 Rle2 Nf6 28 Re7 Bf7 29 Rb7 Rfe8 30 R2e7 Rxe7 31 Rxe7 Nd5 32 Re2 Bf6 33 Nd1 Rc8 34 Ne1 Nc3 35 Nxc3 bc 36 Bf3 g5 37 hg hg 38 fg Bxg5 39 Kg2 Bd2

40 d4 Kg7 41 Nd3 Kf6 42 d5 Rb8 43 Nb4 Rg8 44 Kf2 f4 45 gf Bxf4 46 Nd3 Bh2 47 Ke3 Bg1+ 48 Kf4 Rg5 49 Rg2 Rf5+ 50 K g3 Be3 51 Re2 Bd4 52 Re4 Be5+ 53 Nxe5 Rxe5 54 Rf4+ Ke7 55 Re4 Bg6 (0-1)

The Burger and The Boomer have two things in common: both are Masters, and both are New Yorkers. There, I suppose, the resemblance ends. Karl Burger is a substantial gentleman with a ready wit, partial to bright, solid-color shortsleeve shirts. The hues of the shirts would vary kaleidoscopically, but one accessory was always the same: his red-green-and-yellow striped suspenders. Karl has been with us a long time: I recall seeing his name in some U S Championships Fischer played in (does anyone remember how long ago that was?). Then, he had a "Dr" in front of his name, absent here; does he now "eschew its use", like Tony Saidy?

Karl Burger (2488) - Ben Nethercot (2120) QGA

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 e3 a6 5 Bxc4 e6 6 Qe2 c5 7 dc Bxc5 8 Nc3 b5 9 Bd3 Nbd7 10 0-0 Bb7 11 e4 0-0 12 Bg5 h6 13 Bh4 Be7 14 Rfd1 b4 15 Na4 Qa5 16 b3 e5 17 Nd2 Nb6 18 Nb2 Rad8 19 Bg3 Nfd7 20 Nbc4 Nxc4 21 Nxc4 Qc7 22 Rac1 Qb8 23 Na5 Nc5 24 Nxb7 Qxb7 25 Bxe5 Nxd3 26 Rxd3 Qb5 27 Bxg7 Qxd3 28 Qg4 Bg5 29 Bxh6 Qd6 30 Qxg5+ (1-0)

Jeff Kastner, back when we were both in college (he at CCNY, I at U-M), was known as "The Boomer" for his (shall we say) outgoing personality. Age has mellowed him considerably (as it will do for us all), and toned down his chess as well. These days, Jeff frequently sets up winning positions right out of the opening, thanks to his excellent theoretical knowledge.

Jeff Kastner (2344) - Robert Sutter (1976) Q-Indian

1 d4 e6 2 Nf3 b6 3 c4 Bb7 4 g3 Nf6 5 Bg2 c5?! 6 d5 ed 7 Nh4 Be7 8 cd d6 9 Nc3 Nbd7 10 0-0 0-0 11 Rb1 Re8 12 b4 Rc8 13 N f5 Bf8 14 Nb5 Ne5 15 bc dc 16 Nxa7 Ra8 17 Nc6 Bxc6 18 dc Rx a2 19 Qxd8 Rxd8 20 Rxb6 Rc8 21 Bf4 Rxe2 22 Rfb1 Nd3 23 Bf1 Nxf4 24 Bxe2! Nxe2+ 25 Kf1 g6 26 Rb8 Rc7 27 R1b7 Nd5 28 Rxf8+! (1-0)

Mate is forced.

For those among us who simply cannot bear the thought of (shudder) sightseeing during the U S Open, the organizers, in every U S Open since 1979, scheduled daily morning tournaments, with small entry fees, fast time-controls, and prizes dependent upon entries received. As I said, it keeps some of us off the streets (including the odd TD), skimming the entry fees helps bring the U S Open organizers closer to breaking even, and a few more participants go home happy - at least they won something!

On Monday, a 3-round Swiss was scheduled. It was early in the tournament: the entry list was headed by three A-players, one of whom took home first prize (about $60) in due course. Word of the "easy pickings" spread fast: today, the list was headed by a 2400-player, a 2300-player, and a couple other Masters and CM's. Mike Brooks won - so much for easy pickings!

Masatoshi Eubank (1971) -
Raymond Safdie (1709)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bd3 Be7 7 0-0 0-0 8 Nbd2 f5 9 Ne5 Nc6 10 Ndf3 Bf6 11 Nxc6 bc 12 Bf4 Rb8 13 Rb1 c5 14 c3 c4 15 Bc2 Rb6 16 Be5 Bxe5 17 Nxe5 Qh4 18 Nf3 Qh6 19 Qc1 f4 20 Ne1 Qg5 21 Bd1 Rh6 22 g3 Rh3 23 Nf3 Qh6 24 Kg2 Rf6 25 Rh1 Rh5 26 b3 Bh3+ 27 Kg1 Rhf5 28 bc fg 29 hg Qxc1 30 Rxc1 Bg4 31 Nh4 Rg5 32 Bxg4 Rxg4 33 f3? Rxg3+ 34 Kh2 Rh6 35 fe Rg4 (0-1)

View of the playing hall

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Round Four

If you're not a Daytime Swiss, or Quad, or Tornado player, a place like San Francisco can keep you plenty busy, believe me, until nearly game time. If, like most of the players, you roll in about 6:30, or half an hour before the round, you'll find a swelling crowd in the hall outside the playing room, checking, first their pairing on one of the dozen or so pairing sheets, and then their opponent's rating on the wallchart. (I avoid looking at the wallchart, if I can help it, before the game. Too often I tend to play down to an opponent's rating - like I did the last two nights!)

Inside the playing hall, those with nothing else to do will be sitting at the sets they will do battle with tonight, replaying games from a book they just bought at the bookstand, or from the daily bulletins. This year the bulletins were supplied by Max Burkett & Co. (of Lone Pine Bulletin fame). Having co-edited the bulletins for 1977 (Columbus) and 1980 (Atlanta), I must confess I was somewhat taken aback by Max's mechanical "give-'em'-the-moves" approach: about thirty games per four-page bulletin. I was less than impressed by the proofreading, however. For me, the accuracy of the bulletins was of deep concern, since I planned to use them as a source of games for this book. Eventually, I decided to forego any further sightseeing, in order to spend my days at the far less pleasurable, but necessary task of proofreading the bulletins myself. (Anyone who has bought a set of the 1981 bulletins, and would like a copy of my corrections, can have it by sending me a dollar and a self-addressed stamped envelope; my address appears at the end of this book.)

When the round got underway, it soon became clear that, with the GM's on the top boards now facing Master opposition, the number of perfect scores had to get smaller and smaller. The No. 1 & 2 seeds, Gheorghiu and Christiansen, had dropped from their perches last night; in Round Four, the No. 3 & 4 seeds, Tarjan and Kudrin, followed, taking draws against Snyder (2256) and Radke (2261), respectively. And Arthur Bisguier, a true U S Open veteran (seeded 8th this year), took a 25-move draw against another veteran, John Hudson (2200).

Karl Burger (No. 11) played a 15-move draw with fellow dreadnought Jerry Hanken. The game received two "prizes" from the bookstore/bulletins people, who had been handing out prizes in

an effort to encourage people to turn in games for publication. Jerry Hanken received an award for "conciseness": his score listed only the players' names, followed by "$\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$". And Burger received an award for "artistic merit": he kept his score in figurine algebraic!

- Cartoon in 64

To start off our games selection from this round, two examples of the GM "slow and easy, take no chances, squash him like a bug" style of winning.

Biyiasas - Tom Weissbein (2241) K-Ind Reversed

1 e4 d6 2 Nc3 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 e5 5 Nge2 Nc6 6 0-0 Nge7 7 d3 Be6 8 Nd5 0-0 9 c4 Nd4 10 Nxd4 ed 11 f4 Nc6 12 Bd2 f5 13 b4 fe 14 Bxe4 Qd7 15 b5 Nd8 16 Nb4 Bf5 17 Bd5+ Be6 18 Bh1 Bg4 19 Bf3 Bxf3 20 Qxf3 c5 21 Nd5 Ne6 22 Rael Rae8 23 Qg4 Qf7 24 Qf3 Kh8 25 a4 Nd8 26 Ba5 b6 27 Bd2 Nb7 28 Qg4 Na5 29 Bxa5 ba 30 Qf3 Re6 31 Rxe6 Qxe6 32 Qf2 Qf5 33 Qe2 h5 34 Kg2 Bf6 35 Re1 Kg7 36 h3 Kf7 37 Qf3 Qd7 38 g4 hg 39 hg Rh8 40 Rh1 Rxh1 41 Kxh1 Qe6 42 Qd1 Bh4 43 Kg2 g5 44 Qf3 Kg7 45 Qd1 gf 46 Nxf4 Qe3 47 Nh5+ Kg8 48 Qf3 Bg5 49 Qxe3 de 50 Ng3 Bh4 51 Kf3 (1-0)

I knew GM Andrew Soltis as a champion of neglected, offbeat lines. In Palo Alto, he seemed to be going out of his way, almost, to adopt harmless openings - but he won with them.

GM Soltis - Tom Dorsch (2206) French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 Bd3 de 5 Nxe4 Nbd7 6 Nf3 Nxe4 7 Bxe4 Nf6 8 Bd3 Be7 9 0-0 0-0 10 b3 b6 11 Bb2 Bb7 12 c4 h6 13 Qe2 Nh5 14 Be4 Nf4 15 Qe3 Bxe4 16 Qxe4 Ng6 17 Radl Bf6 18 Rfel Qc8 19 Rd3 Rd8 20 Rldl c6 21 h4 Qc7 22 Bcl Rac8 23 h5 Nf8 24 Bf4 Qe7 25 Ne5 Bxe5 26 Bxe5 Nd7 27 Bg3 Re8 28 Bh4 Qd6 29 Qg4 Kh8 30 Rg3 Rg8 31 Qf3 Rgf8 32 Rg4 Rce8 33 Bg3 e5 34 de Qe6 35 Re4 f5 36 Re3 Qf7 37 Bf4 Nc5 38 R d6 Ne6 39 Red3 c5 40 g3 Nd4 41 Qdl Qb7 42 Rd5 Rd8 43 Be3 Rxd5 44 cd Qxd5 45 Bxd4 cd 46 Rxd4 Qxe5 47 Rd5 Qe4 48 Rd7 Re8 49 Rxa7 Qb4 50 Kg2 Rel 51 Qd5 Qf8 52 Rf7 Qe8 53 Qxf5 Kg8 54 Rc7 Qa8+ 55 f3 (1-0)

Dmitri Gurevich was held to half a point by Steve Cross; that left only nine of the top twenty seeds with perfect scores after four rounds. Charles Powell, a former Virginia master now resident of California, kept his place in those exalted ranks with the following short game over the 1980 U S Amateur Champion.

Charles Powell (2397) - Kurt Stein (2169) QP Game

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 g6 3 Nc3 d5 4 Bf4 Nh5 5 Bg5 f6?! 6 Be3 Ng7 7 Bh6 Nf5 8 Bxf8 Kxf8 9 Qd2 c6 10 e4 de 11 Nxe4 Nd6 12 Qh6+ Kf7 13 Ng3 Bg4 14 Be2 Bxf3 15 Bxf3 Qb6 16 0-0 Qxd4 17 Rfel Nd7 18 c3 Qc5 19 Bdl Ne5 20 Bb3 e6 21 Radl Rad8 22 Rd4 Rdg8 23 f4 Nb5 24 fe fe 25 Ne4 Qb6 26 Rfl+ Ke7 27 Qg5+ (1-0)

Scott McDonald (2153) - Robert Rowley (2383) Q-Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 g3 Bb7 5 Bg2 Be7 6 Nc3 0-0 7 0-0 Ne4 8 Qd3 Nxc3 9 bc?! f5 10 Nel Qc8 11 e4 fe 12 Bxe4 Bxe4 13 Qxe4 Nc6 14 Nd3 Bf6 15 Ba3? Re8 16 c5 Qa6! 17 Bb2 Qc4 18 Rfel Rb8 19 Re2 Ne7 20 Rael Nd5 21 cb ab 22 Nf4 c6 23 Nx d5 cd 24 Qbl b5 25 Rc2 Rec8 26 Ree2 Qa4 27 Bcl Rxc3! 28 Rxc3 Qdl+ 29 Kg2 Qxe2 30 Be3 Ra8 31 Rc2 Qg4 32 f3 Qg6 33 Qcl Qe8 34 Qb2 Qb8 35 Bf4 Qb6 36 Rc5 Qxc5 (0-1)

Did you see that Black queen dance?

Mark Orfalea, after drawing Gheorghiu in Round Three, was rewarded with a "mere" International Master, John Grefe, in Round Four.

IM John Grefe (2502) - Orfalea Petroff

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 c4 Nf6 6 d4 d5 7 Nc3 Be7 8 Bd3 0-0 9 h3 c5 10 Be3 cd 11 Nxd4 dc 12 Bxc4 Qc7 13 Qe2 a6 14 Rc1 Nc6 15 0-0 Bd7 16 Nxc6 Bxc6 17 Nd5 Qe5 18 Nxe7+ Qx e7 19 Bg5 Qxe2 20 Bxe2 Rfe8 21 Rfe1 Nd5 22 Bc4 h6 23 Bd2 Nb6 24 Bf1 Nd5 25 Rxe8+ Rxe8 26 Re1 Rc8 27 g3 f6 28 Be2 Re8 29 B h5 Rxe1+ 30 Bxe1 Kf8 31 Bd2 Be8 32 Be2 Ke7 33 f4 f5 34 Bd3 g6 35 Kf2 Kd6 36 g4 Bd7 37 Kg3 Ke6 38 gf+ gf 39 Bc4 Be8 40 Bc3 Kd6 41 Be5+ Kc5 42 Bd3 Bg6 43 Bg7 Nb4 44 Bb1 h5 45 Kh4 Nd5 46 Kg5 Bf7 47 Bxf5 b5 48 Be5 Ne3 49 Bg6 Bxg6 50 Kxg6 h4 51 f5 (1-0)

Meanwhile, Bill Chesney (2165) took out William Batchelder to become the only CM with 4 pts. With only 2 pts. of my own to show for the first four rounds, I could see that this was not fated to be a glory year for me at the Open. So I decided to take what comfort I could by chronicling others' exploits instead.

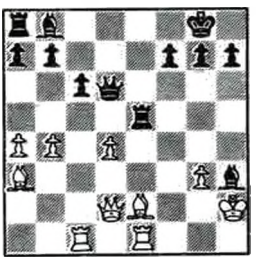
David Bennett (1875) - Don Reents (2105) Czech Benoni

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e5 4 Nc3 d6 5 e4 Be7 6 Bd3 Nbd7 7 Nge2 0-0 8 0-0 Ne8 9 g4 Bg5 10 Ng3 g6 11 Kh1 a6 12 a4 Ng7 13 Bd2 Bf4 14 Nce2 Bxd2 15 Qxd2 Nf6 16 f3 h5 17 gh Nfxh5 18 Rg1 Qh4 19 Qe1 Nf4 20 Nxf4 Qxf4 21 Qe2 Bd7 22 a5 Rab8 23 Rgb1 b6 24 b4 cb 25 Rxb4 ab 26 Rxb8 Rxb8 27 Rxa5 Bh3 28 Qd1 Rb2 29 Bc2 Qe3 30 Rxa6 Qf2 31 Ra8+ Kh7 (0-1)

Ken Lerch (1621) - Don Townsend (1881) Semi-Slav

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nc3 e6 4 e3 Nf6 5 Nf3 Nbd7 6 cd ed 7 Be2 Bd6 8 0-0 0-0 9 a3 Re8 10 b4 Bb8 11 a4 Qc7 12 Ba3 Ne4 13 R c1 Ndf6 14 g3 Bh3 15 Re1 Nxf2!? 16 Nx d5 Nxd5 17 Kxf2 Nxe3 18 Qd2 Ng4+ 19 Kg1 Nxh2 20 Ne5 Qd6 21 Kxh2 Rxe5

(Diagram)



Position after ..Rxe5

22 Qf4 Qd5 23 Qf2 Rg5 24 Rc3 Be6 25 Rg1 Qe4 26 Rg2 Bc7 27 b5 Bb6 28 Bf3 Qxd4 29 Qc2 Bg4 30 Bxg4 Qxg4 31 Bc5 Qh5+ 32 Kg1 Rxc5 (0-1)

Whew!

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Round Five

If you happen to wander into the tournament area at any hour significantly before the start of the evening's round, you are likely to find a motley crew of players assembled in front of the wallcharts, engaged in one of the chessplayer's least useful pursuits: secondguessing the TDs. With the basic principles of Swiss-System pairing so well known (line up the list of n-pointers by rating, split the list, and pair the top half against the bottom - that is, insofar as color allotments allow) many players want at least an inkling of who their prospective opponent is likely to be.

I say it is one of the chessplayer's least useful pursuits, because, in addition to the aforementioned rating order, the TD also has color problems to consider, as well as whether the player in question was "up-paired" or "down-paired" in previous rounds. Thus, the TDs may have to pair somebody two or three "slots" out of order, screwing up everybody's calculations.

But even allowing for all that, I found the top eight pairings to be possibly the most curious set of pairings I'd yet encountered in my fifteen years as a player and seven or eight years as a registered TD. In fact, it looked as if they were done by making use of some sort of "reverse English"!

Consider: there were seventeen 4-pointers. That meant the lowest 4-pointer, Bill Chesney (2165) must be dropped to play the highest $3\frac{1}{2}$-pointer, Gheorghiu (2653) (Gulp!), which was done. So far, so good.

That left sixteen perfect scores, rated as follows:

Biyiasas	(2527)	Youngworth	(2401)
Shirazi	(2525)	Powell	(2397)
Soltis	(2523)	Rowley	(2383)
deFirmian	(2512)	Gogel	(2331)
Silman	(2484)	Feldman	(2321)
Root	(2443)	Sulman	(2312)
Thinnsen	(2429)	Ron Gross	(2307)
Lobo	(2416)	Davis	'2265)

And that, with minor alterations for color, is the way I would

have paired the top boards this round. What actually happened?

Biyiasas (No. 1) played Gross (No. 15), Shirazi (2) played Davis (16), Sulman (14) played Soltis (3), deFirmian (4) played Gogel (12) - do you begin to detect a pattern here?- Feldman (13) was paired with Silman (5), Rowley (11) with Root (6), Thinnsen (7) with Powell (10), and Youngworth (9) with Lobo (8) - that's the pairing that tipped me off. Why, in so early a round, with sixteen players in a point group, should the two middle men be paired?

Perhaps as a result of these "surprise" pairings, perhaps just because the opposition was stronger (after all, even the "weakest" of the bottom half of the 4-pointers was nearly 2300!), for whatever reason, there was hardly an "easy" game to be found on the top boards tonight. Oh, Biyiasas won smoothly enough, but on the whole, he seemed to be in pretty good form this Open.

Ron Gross (2307) - GM Biyiasas K-Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Bd3 0-0 6 Bg5 e5 7 d5 a6 8 Qd2 Qe8 9 Nge2 Nbd7 10 0-0 Nh5 11 Be3 f5 12 ef gf 13 f4 e4 14 Bc2 Ndf6 15 h3 Bd7 16 b4 Kh8 17 Kh2 Qg6 18 Rg1 Rf7 19 Raf1 Rg8 20 Bd4 Qh6 21 g3 Ng4+ 22 Kg2 Ne5 23 Bxe5 Bxe5 24 Qe1 Nxf4+25 Nxf4 Bxf4 26 Rxf4 Qxf4 27 Rf1 Qe5 28 Nxe4 Rfg7 (0-1)

Shirazi turned a confused, somewhat inferior opening into yet another of his patented kingside attacks to win just before the time-control, and Soltis ground out a long endgame win over Sulman, a young master who made headlines by occupying the top board for most of last year's Open in Atlanta. This Round Five loss must've really hurt him: he went on to lose his next two games as well, "castling long" on the crosstable.

(In that regard, mention must be made of Michael Wyatt, a Cat-III player from California, who set what was surely the record for the Palo Alto Open, and possibly for any Open: he "castled long & short", losing his first eight games! I think that deserves a special "doggedness" award - how about it, New Windsor?)

Which brings us to the first big upset of the tournament. Oh, there had already been several GMs and IMs dropping the odd half-point or two; but this was the first IM loss of the Open.

IM deFirmian - Dennis Gogel (2331) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 Nc3 a6 4 d4 cd 5 Nxd4 Qc7 6 g3 Bb4 7 Ne2 Nf6 8 Bg2 Be7 9 0-0 Nc6 10 b3 b5 11 Nf4 Bb7 12 Bb2 0-0 13 R el d6 14 Qd2 Rac8 15 Nd3 Rfd8 16 a3 Nd4 17 Racl d5 18 ed Nx d5 19 Ne4 Nf6 20 Nxf6+ Bxf6 21 Bxd4 Bxd4 22 Bxb7 Qxb7 23 Q f4 Bc3 24 Re2 Rd4 25 Qe3 Qd5 26 Rfl a5 27 Nf4 Qd6 28 Qf3 Bd2 29 Nd3 Rxc2 30 Ne5 Rc7 31 Rdl Bg5 32 Rxd4 Qxd4 33 h4 Bf6 34 Ng4 Be7 35 Qa8+ Bf8 36 Re4 Qdl+ 37 Kh2 Qf3 38 Kh3 f5 (0-1)

There now - doesn't it look easy? You, too, can beat an IM .. Which raises an interesting question, to wit: Gogel beats de Firmian; two weeks before Palo Alto, deFirmian beats Korchnoi, at a tournament in Baden, Germany. If Korchnoi goes on to beat Karpov in Merano - does that give Gogel the right to a Candidates' slot?

Back to the real world ...

The remaining four 4-point pairings all ended in draws, of which the draw on Board 7 was by far the most interesting.

James Thinnsen (2429) - Charles Powell Old-Indian

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 d6 4 g3 Be7 5 Bg2 0-0 6 d4 Nbd7 7 0-0 c6 8 e4 a6 9 Qc2 b5 10 Rdl Qc7 11 c5 dc 12 de Ng4 13 Rx d7 Bxd7 14 Bf4 Be6 15 h3 Nh6 16 Qcl Kh8 17 Bxh6 gh 18 Qxh6 Rg8 19 Ne2 Qd8 20 Nf4 Qf8 21 Qh5 Rd8 22 b3 Rg6 23 Kh2 Rh6

At this point, having disposed of my Cat-II opponent, I wandered by to see how the top boards were doing. I could tell Thinnsen was in trouble, even before looking at the board: he had taken off his T-shirt, and was bent bare-chested over the board. Perhaps he absorbs energy from the ceiling lights?

24 Nxe6 fe 25 Qg4 Rg6 26 Qh5 Qg7 27 Kgl Rg8 28 Rdl c4 29 bc bc 30 Rcl Rh6 31 Qg4 Qf8 32 Qf4 Qxf4 33 gf Rhg6 34 Nel Bb4 35 f5 Rg5 36 h4 Rg4 37 Kfl Bxel 38 Bf3 Rgl+ 39 Ke2 c3 40 Rx el Rxel+ 41 Kxel Rd8 42 Bdl ef 43 ef Rd5 44 f4 Rd4 45 Bc2 Rxf4 46 f6 Kg8 47 Ke2 Rxh4 48 Kd3 Rh3+ 49 Kd4 Rh2 50 Bb3+ Kf8 51 Kxc3 Re2 52 Kd4 h5 53 e6 h4 54 Kc5 h3 55 e7+ Ke8 56 Kd6 Rd2+ 57 Ke6 Re2+ 58 Kd6 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Bill Chesney met his fate at the hands of GM Gheorghiu, which pulled Florin up to within half a point of the pace. Grefe also managed to overcome Hudson, while GM Tarjan dropped another half-point back, drawing with Colombian Master Alciguel Ruiz.

The next three boards produced some snappy little games. To start off, we have Karl Burger, once again making something out of next to nothing.

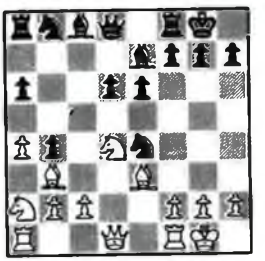
Karl Burger - Steve Cross (2196) Semi-Tarrasch

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 d4 d5 4 Nc3 c5 5 cd Nxd5 6 e4 Nxc3 7 bc cd 8 cd Nc6 9 Bc4 b5 10 Be2 Bb4+ 11 Bd2 Qa5 12 Bxb4 Qxb4+ 13 Qd2 Bd7 14 Qxb4 Nxb4 15 Kd2 a6 16 Rhb1 Nc6 17 a4 ba 18 Rxa4 a5 19 Rba1 0-0-0 20 Bb5 f5 21 Rc4 Kb7 22 Bxc6 Bxc6 23 Rb1+ Ka7 24 Rxc6 fe 25 Ne5 Rxd4+ 26 Ke3 Rb4 27 Rxb4 ab 28 Rc4 (1-0)

Dmitri Gurevich springs what appears to be a theoretical innovation on his unsuspecting opponent (from the diagram, ECO continues: 12 Nxb4 Qc7 13 f4 d5 14 Nd3 Nd7).

Dmitri Gurevich - Thomas Banks (2187) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 b5 8 0-0 Be7 9 Be3 0-0 10 a4 b4 11 Na2 Nxe4 (Diagram)



Position after ..Nxe4

12 Nxe6! Bxe6 13 Bd5! Bxd5 14 Qxd5 Nd7 15 Qxe4 a5 16 c3 Nf6 17 Qd4 bc 18 Nxc3 Qd7 19 h3 Rfd8 20 Rac1 Qf5 21 Rfd1 d5 22 Qd3 Qxd3 23 Rxd3 h6 24 Rcd1 Rab8 25 Nxd5 Nxd5 26 Rxd5 Rxd5 27 Rxd5 Rxb2 28 Rxa5 Bd6 29 Ra8+ Kh7 30 g3 Be5 31 a5 f5 32 a6 (1-0)

And, finally, the same variation, treated in somewhat more conventional fashion, produced a win for White, all the same.

Mike Brooks (2426) - Renard Anderson (2138) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 d4 cd 5 Nxd4 a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 b5 8 0-0 Be7 9 Be3 0-0 10 f4 Bb7 11 e5 de 12 fe Nd5 13 Nxd5

Bxd5 14 Qg4 Bc5 15 Khl Bxd4 16 Bxd4 Bxb3 17 ab Nc6 18 Bc5 Re8 19 Radl Qc8 20 Bd6 Nd8 21 Rd3 Qxc2 22 Rg3 g6 23 Rc3 Qd2 24 Rcd7 Qe3 25 Qh4 h6 26 Qf6 Qg5 27 Qf3 Qf5 28 Qe2 Q g5 29 Qe4 Rb8 30 h4 Qh5 31 Rc3 Rb7 32 Rh3 f5 33 ef Kh7 34 Be5 (1-0)

John Hillery (2163) - Dan Shapiro (2319) Nimzo-Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 a3 Bxc3+ 5 bc d6 6 f3 Nh5 7 Nh3 e5 8 Bg5?! f6 9 Bh4 Bxh3 10 gh 0-0 11 de de 12 Qd5+ Qxd5 13 cd Nd7 14 e3 Nc5 15 Be2 g6 16 Rgl Ng7 17 0-0-0 Rad8 18 B el Nf5 19 Bf2 e4 20 f4 Kf7 21 Kc2 Rd6 22 Rd2 Rfd8 23 Rgdl N e7 24 c4 Ra6 25 Ral Rdd6 26 Rddl Nf5 27 Rdbl Rdb6 28 Rxb6 Rxb6 29 Ra2 Rb3 30 Kd2 a5 31 a4 b6 32 Bdl Rb4 33 Kc3 Nd6 34 Be2 Nxa4+ 35 Kd4 Nf5+ (0-1)

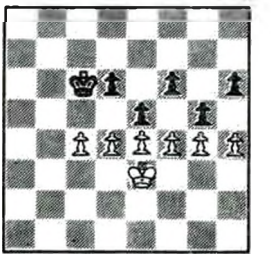
Ron Snyder (2256) - Frank Berry, Jr (2033) French

1 e4 e6 2 b3 d5 3 Bb2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 d4 b6 6 Nf3 Ba6 7 Bxa6 Nxa6 8 c4 c6 9 0-0 Nc7 10 Nc3 Be7 11 cd cd 12 Ne2 f6 13 ef gf 14 Nf4 Bd6 15 Nh5 Qe7 16 Rcl 0-0-0 17 Qc2 Kb8 18 Ba3 Rc8 19 Bxd6 Qxd6 20 Qc6 Qxc6 21 Rxc6 Rhf8 22 Rel Rce8 23 Ng7 Re7 24 Nf5 Re8 25 Ng7 Re7 26 Nxe6 Rfe8 27 Rxc7 (1-0)

Barry Nelson (2055) - D Russ Wada (2308) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 f4 Nf6 3 d3 g6 4 g3 Bg7 5 Bg2 0-0 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 0-0 d6 8 h3 Rb8 9 a4 a6 10 g4 b5 11 ab ab 12 Be3 b4 13 Nbd2 Nd7 14 Nc4 Nb6 15 Nfd2 Nxc4 16 Nxc4 Nd4 17 Qd2 Bb7 18 f5 Ra8 19 Rxa8 Bxa8 20 Bh6 d5 21 Bxg7 Kxg7 22 ed Bxd5 23 Ne3 Bx g2 24 Qxg2 Qd6 25 g5 gf 26 Rxf5 Qe6 27 Qf2 Nxf5 28 Nxf5 K h8 29 Qxc5 Rc8 30 Qd4+ f6 31 Nh6 Qel+ 32 Kg2 Rxc2+ 33 K f3 Qe2+ 34 Kg3 Qg2+ (0-1)

The position at right wasn't from a top-board game - in fact, it came from the board next to mine. Weird, isn't it?



Rosenbaum - M Ryan
White to move (44)

Jose Marcal - Rick Shepard, Jr (1970) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Be2 Be7 7 0-0 a6 8 f4 Qc7 9 a4 0-0 10 Khl Nc6 11 Nf3 Bd7 12 Qel Rac8 13 Bd3 Nb4 14 e5 Nxd3 15 cd de 16 fe Nd5 17 Ne4 f5 18 ef gf 19 Bh6 R. f7 20 Rcl Qb8 21 Rxc8+ Bxc8 22 Qh4 Qc7 23 Qg4+ Kh8 24 Qh5 Bf8 25 Rcl Qd7 26 Qxf7! Bh6 27 Qxd7 Bxd7 28 Ral Bf8 29 b3 Bb4 30 Rcl Bc6 31 Nd4 Bd7 32 Nc5 Ba3 33 Rc2 Ne3 34 Nxd7 (1-0)

Mark Orfalea - Hy Wallach (1907) Evans Gambit (!?)

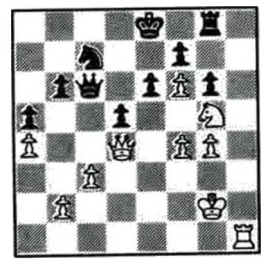
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 b4 Bxb4 5 c3 Bc5 6 d4 ed 7 cd Bb4+ 8 Nbd2 Na5 9 Bd3 Ne7 10 Rbl Bxd2+ 11 Bxd2 c6 12 e5 h6 13 0-0 0-0 14 Nh4 b6 15 Bxh6 d5 16 Bg5 Qd7 17 Qh5 g6 18 Qh6 (1-0)

Clifford Anderson (1701) - Alan Glasscoe (1903) Center Counter

1 e4 d5 2 ed Nf6 3 c4 c6 4 dc? Nxc6 5 Nf3 e5 6 d3 e4! 7 de Qxdl+ 8 Kxdl Nxe4 9 Be3 Bg4 10 Be2 0-0-0+ 11 Nfd2 Bf5 12 a3 Bc5 13 Bxc5 Nxc5 14 Kcl Nd4 15 Bdl Nd3+ (0-1)

Sergey Kudrin (2544) - Jerome Hanken (2216) Pirc

1 e4 g6 2 d4 Bg7 3 Nc3 c6 4 Bc4 d6 5 Qe2 Nf6 6 e5 Nd5 7 Bd2 Nxc3 8 Bxc3 d5 9 Bd3 a5 10 f4 e6 11 Nf3 b6 12 0-0 Ba6 13 Bxa6 Nxa6 14 Bel Qd7 15 Bh4 Nc7 16 g4 c5 17 c3 h5 18 h3 hg 19 hg Qb5 20 Qf2 Kd7 21 a4 Qc6 22 Bf6 Rag8 23 Ng5 Ke8 24 Kg2 Kf8 25 Rhl Rxhl 26 Rxhl cd 27 Qxd4 Bxf6 28 ef Ke8(see Diagram)



29 Nxf7! (1-0)

After 29 .. Kxf7, 30 Rh7+ followed by 31 f7 (+) wins the rook. Cute!

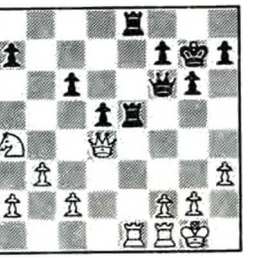
Round Six

There were now just four perfect 5's: Biyiasas, Shirazi, Soltis, and Gogel (in order of ratings), closely followed by two dozen $4\frac{1}{2}$'s.

The top-board game was a short 20-move draw, but it looked interesting for a while.

GM Biyiasas - GM Soltis Caro-Kann

1 e4 g6 2 Nc3 c6 3 Nf3 d5 4 d4 Bg4 5 ed cd 6 Bb5+ Nc6 7 Bf4 Bg7 8 h3 Bxf3 9 Qxf3 Nf6 10 Be5 0-0 11 0-0 e6 12 Bxc6 bc 13 Na4 Ne4 14 Bxg7 Kxg7 15 Qd3 Qf6 16 b3 Rfe8 17 Rael e5 18 de Rxe5 19 Qd4 Rae8 (Diagram)



Position after ..Rae8

20 Re3 R5e7 21 Qxf6+ Kxf6 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

If White had taken the pawn in the diagrammed position, then 20 .. Nd2! generates lots of unclear play - the sort of game Soltis likes more than Biyiasas does.

Board 2, by contrast, saw a battle royal waged right up to the time-control, with the outcome in doubt up until the very last exchange.

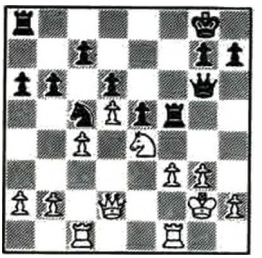
Gogel - Shirazi English

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 d5 4 cd Nxd5 5 Bg2 Nb6 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 d3 Be7 8 0-0 0-0 9 a4 a5 10 Be3 Bg4 11 Nd2 f5 12 Bxb6!? cb 13 N c4 Kh8 14 Bxc6 bc 15 Nxe5 Bh3 16 Nxc6 Qe8 17 Nxe7 Bxf1 18 Ne d5 Bh3 19 Nf4 Bg4 20 Qd2 Bh5 21 Ncd5 Rb8 22 Nc7 Qf7 23 Rc1 Rfc8 24 Nb5 Rxc1+ 25 Qxc1 Rf8 26 Qc3 Bg6 27 h4 Qf6 28 Qxf6 Rxf6 29 Nxg6+ Rxg6 30 Kg2 f4 31 e4 fg 32 fg Kg8 33 d4 Rc6 34 Na3 Kf7 35 Kf3 Rc1 36 Kf4 Kf6 37 d5 Rf1+ 38 Ke3 Rg1 39 N c4 Rg3+ 40 Kd4 Rb3 41 e5+ Ke7 42 Nd6 Rb4+ 43 Kc3 g6 44 b3 h6 45 h5 gh 46 Nf5+ Kd8 47 Nd4 h4! 48 Nc6+ Kd7 49 e6+ Kd6 50 Ne5 Re4 (0-1)

Florin Gheorghiu took another draw, this time with White, in a game remarkably similar to his Round Three draw with Orfalea: a solid theoretical opening, a slight plus for Gheorghiu,

slipping to a slight plus for his opponent at the point where the draw is agreed. Is it possible that Florin will not win the U S Open as he has done the previous two years?

Gheorghiu - Rowley Queen's Indian



1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 g3 Bb7 5 Bg2 Be7 6 0-0 0-0 7 Nc3 Ne4 8 B d2 Nxc3 9 Bxc3 Be4 10 d5 Bf6 11 Rc1 Qe7 12 Qd2 d6 13 Bxf6 Qxf6 14 Nd4 Bxg2 15 Kxg2 e5 16 Nb5 a6 17 Nc3 Nd7 18 e4 Qg6 19 f3 f5 20 ef Rxf5 21 Ne4 Nc5 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Position after ..Nc5

Well, what can you do? Obviously, Florin expected his opponent to be thoroughly "booked up" on the currently popular 4 a3 line he generally plays, so he tried to cross him up with something a great deal older - which didn't work, because Bob Rowley is one of the better-booked Masters in the Southwest. Well, you can't win 'em all ...

When Powell made his second move Bc1-g5 against Christiansen, I was reminded of how he had used the same move to win a 20-mover against Stein two rounds before. In that game, evidently, the element of surprise was the deciding factor, as Kurt Stein was clearly unfamiliar with the opening. Well, Basman once wrote an article on 1 d4 Nf6 2 Bg5, which he titled, "Once In A Tournament", explaining that the opening wasn't good for any more than once.

The present game is an object lesson in how Black should handle Trompowsky's 2 Bg5.

Charles Powell - GM Larry Christiansen

1 d4 Nf6 2 Bg5 c5 3 d5 Ne4 4 Bf4 Qb6 5 Qc1 e6 6 de fe 7 Nf3 Nc6 8 e3 Be7 9 Bd3 Nf6 10 0-0 d5 11 c4 0-0 12 Nc3 Bd7 13 N e5 Rad8 14 cd ed 15 Nxd7 Rxd7 16 Bf5 R7d8 17 Qc2 Kh8 18 Ra c1 c4 19 a3 d4!

Killer. From here on, Black controls the board.

20 Ndl Nd5 21 Bh3 Nxf4 22 ef Na5 23 Qe2 Bd6 24 g3 Rde8 25 Qh5 g6 26 Qd5 Rd8 27 Qg5 Nb3 28 Rxc4 Nd2 (0-1)

At the tournament's midpoint, then, only one man had a perfect score: IM Kamran Shirazi (6-0). He was closely pursued, however, by a raft of $5\frac{1}{2}$-pointers: Biyiasas, Soltis, Christiansen, Kudrin, Grefe, Shapiro, Silman, Gurevich, Root, Thinnsen, Lobo, and a CM out of Nevada named Paul Carrasco (2054) - on which more later. For now, let's see how those $5\frac{1}{2}$-pointers got there.

IM John Grefe - Kevin Burnett (2322) French

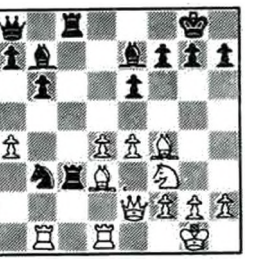
1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nc6 4 Ngf3 Nf6 5 e5 Nd7 6 b3

ECO considers this harmless enough, dismissing it with a single line (6 Nb3 is the main variation) - but you have to know what to do against it (6 .. f6! 7 Bb2 Be7!)

6 ... Be7 7 Bb2 0-0 8 a3 a5 9 c4 dc 10 bc f6 11 ef Bxf6 12 Ne4 e5 13 d5 Ne7 14 c5 Kh8 15Bc 4 Ng6 16 0-0 b6 17 c6 Nc5 18 Nxc5 bc 19 Nd2 Bf5 20 f3 Bg5 21 Qel Bf4 22 Ne4 Bxe4 23 fe Qg5 24 Bcl Nh4 25 Qg3! Qh5 26 Bxf4 ef 27 Rx f4 Ng6 28 Rxf8+ Rxf8 29 Rfl Rxfl+ 30 Bxfl Ne5 31 d6 (1-0)

Dan Shapiro - Karl Burger Queen's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 b6 4 a3 Bb7 5 Nc3 d5 6 cd Nxd5 7 e3 Be7 8 Bb5+ c6 9 Bd3 Nxc3 10 bc c5 11 e4 Nc6 12 Be3 cd 13 cd Rc8 14 0-0 0-0 15 Qe2 Na5 16 Rfdl Rc3 17 a4 Nb3 18 Ra bl Qa8 19 Bf4 Rfc8 (Diagram)



Position after .. Rfc8

If there is a single "right way" to play this line for Black, I believe Karl may have found it in this game. With nothing but natural aggressive/developing moves, he has built up Black's position to something that looks suspiciously like it ought to be labeled "winning". (Danny told me afterward, in fact, that it was winning - until that fatal exchange sac ...)

20 h3 Ba3 21 d5 Nc5 22 Bb5 ed 23 ed Bxd5 24 Be5 Rxf3?

24 .. Bxf3 was a pretty simple win. I'm sure this looked good too - at the time. But now watch what happens!

25 gf Bxf3 26 Qe3 Bxdl 27 Qg3! g6 28 Rxdl Qe4 29 Qg5 Ne6 30 Qf6 (1-0)

Jeremy Silman came all unknown out of Chicago a few years ago, apparently to play in Lone Pines. He followed the "Boy Guru" Maharaj Ji for a while, until the latter's deposition; whatever, the merits of "Ji/Med", Jeremy did acquire a Senior Master rating - and a fairly facile pen, as Chess Life readers already know.

Jeremy Silman in an unguarded moment

Jeremy now resides in California, where the weather is kinder to cars and wardrobes than it is in the Midwest. His style is generally slow and careful, as the following game attests.

Jeremy Silman (2484) - Ozdal Barkan (2284) QGD

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 Nbd7 5 Bf4 c6 6 e3 Be7 7 h3 0-0 8 Rcl a6 9 a3 Re8 10 c5 Nh5 11 Bh2 g6 12 Be2 f6 13 e4 B f8 14 0-0 Bh6 15 Rc2 Kh8 16 Rel Nf4 17 Bfl Rg8 18 b4 Nf8 19 a4 g5 20 Bxf4!

White controls more space and the center especially; hence, one feels Black's kingside attack ought to be insufficient. But proving that requires a certain technique - which White demonstrates. First, the attack is localized, so it's easier to contain; then the counterattack begins, pressed home by means of a small sacrifice (move 27), and Black's unsound structure falls apart.

20 ... gf 21 Nh2 Ng6 22 Qh5 Bf8 23 ed cd 24 Bd3 f5 25 Nf3 Be7 26 Rce2 Bf6 27 Rxe6! Bxe6 28 Rxe6 Be7 29 Bxf5 Nf8 30 Ne5 Qe8 31 Nf7+ Kg7 32 Nxd5! Nxe6 33 Qh6+ Kxf7 34 Bxe6 # (1-0)

In our next game, a little-explored line of the Pirc led to an early endgame; surprisingly enough, however, fierce complications quickly ensued. Once again, the Brooklyn Battler came out on top.

Doug McClintock (2299) - Dmitri Gurevich Pirc

1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 g6 4 f4 Bg7 5 Nf3 0-0 6 e5 de 7 de Qxdl+ 8 Kxdl Rd8+ 9 Kel Ne8 10 Bc4 Nc6 11 Ng5 e6 12 Be3 Na5 13 Bd3 f6 14 Nf3 Nc6 15 h4!? Nb4 15 h5 Nxd3+ 17 cd Rx d3 18 Ke2 Rd7 19 hg hg 20 ef Bxf6 21 Rh6 Rg7 22 Ne4 b6 23 Nxf6+ Nxf6 24 Bd4 Ba6+ 25 Kd2 Rd8 26 Kc2 Ng4 27 Rh4 c5 28 Rxg4 cd 29 Rel d3+ 30 Kd2 Rc8 31 Rcl Rxcl 32 Kxcl Kf7 33 Ne5+ Kf6 34 Kd2 Kf5 35 Rg3 g5 36 Nxd3 Bxd3 37 Kx d3 Rd7+ 38 Ke2 gf 39 Rg8 Ke4 40 Rc8 e5 41 Rf8 Rc7 42 Kd2 Rg7 (0-1)

Our "Team Michigan" (what we call the dozen or so true U S Open fanatics who follow the Open every year from the Water Wonderland) ended the week on a sad note, when our "Team Leader" was professionally demolished as follows.

Doug Root - Steven Feldman (2321) French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 Ne7 4 Nf3 b6 5 c3 Qd7 6 h4 c5 7 h5 h6 8 Nbd2 Ba6 9 Bxa6 Nxa6 10 Qe2 Qb7 11 0-0 Nc6 12 Rdl Be7 13 Nfl 0-0-0 14 Bf4 Kb8 15 Ne3 Nc7 16 dc Bxc5?

.. bc would have allowed Black to put up some fight for the central squares. From here on, it's White's game.

17 Nc2 g6 18 b4 Be7 19 a4 gh 20 Nfd4! Bg5 21 Bh2 Ka8 22 b5 Nxd4 23 Nxd4 a5 24 ba Qxa6 25 Nb5 Kb8 26 Rdbl Nxb5 27 Rx b5 Rd7 28 a5 Rb7 29 Qfl ba 30 Raxa5 Qc6 31 Rc5 Qb6 32 Ra b5 Qa7 33 Rxb7+ Kxb7 34 Qb5+ Qb6 35 Qd7+ Ka8 36 Qa4 + Kb7 37 Rb5 (1-0)

And last in this collection of games from the $4\frac{1}{2}$-pointers is the following very typical effort from Senior Master Richard

Lobo - typical in that Lobo's games indicate that this young man evidently possesses a great store of patience.

Richard Lobo (2416) - Ernest Curto (2067) English

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 e5 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 g3 Bc5 5 d3 d6 6 Bg2 Be6 7 a3 a5 8 0-0 0-0 9 e3 Bb6 10 b3 Qe8 11 Bb2 Rd8 12 Nb5 Ne7 13 d4 Nf5 14 Qc2 e4 15 Ng5 c6 16 Nxd6 Nxd6 17 c5 Bf5 18 cd h6 19 N h3 Qd7 20 Nf4 Qxd6 21 a4 Rfe8 22 Ba3 Qd7 23 b4 Bc7 24 Ne2 Nh7 25 Nc3 ab 26 Bxb4 Nf6 27 Rfb1 b6 28 Rc1 Bd6 29 Bxd6 Qxd6 30 Rab1 Rb8 31 Rb2 c5 32 Nb5 Qd7 33 dc bc 34 Rd1 Qb7 35 Rbb1 Red8 36 Nd6 Qd7 37 Rxb8 Rxb8 38 Nxe4 Bxe4 39 Bxe4

The first pawn!

39 ... Qg4 40 Bg2 Qb4 41 Bf1 Qg4 42 h3 Qb4 43 Bb5 Ne8 44 R d7 Qa3 45 Kg2 Nf6 46 Rc7 Rd8 47 Rxc5 Ne4 48 Rc8 (1-0)

Lobo evidently possesses other talents as well: he won both the darts and the table-tennis tournaments that were organized over the weekend.

Ah, how could we forget the round's great upset: CM Paul Carrasco overcame Senior Master Perry Youngworth, to move, however briefly, into a tie for second! Here's how he did it.

Perry Youngworth (2401) - Paul Carrasco (2054) Sicilian

1 c4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 e4 Bb4 7 Nx c6 bc 8 Qc2 0-0 9 Bd3 e5 10 0-0 d6 11 Na4!? d5! 12 Bg5 d4

"When the Maroczy didn't bind.." Black has quite a good game already.

13 c5 h6 14 Bxf6 Qxf6 15 a3 Ba5 16 b4 Bc7 17 Nb2 Bd7 18 Nc4 Qe7 19 Rae1 a5 20 f4 ab 21 ab f6 22 f5 Rfb8 23 Rb1 Be8 24 N d2 Bf7 25 Bc4 Ra3 26 Rb3 Rba8 27 Rfb1 Kf8 28 Bxf7 Qxf7 29 Qc4 Ra2 30 Qxf7+ Kxf7 31 R1b2 h5 32 Kf2 g6 33 fg+ Kxg6 34 Nf3 Rxb2+ 35 Rxb2 Ra3 36 b5 cb 37 Rxb5 Rc3 38 g3 Kf7 39 Nh4 Rc2+ 40 Ke1 Ke6 41 Nf5 Kd7 42 h4 Kc6 43 Rb3 Kxc5 44 Ng7 Ba5+ 45 Kd1 Rh2 46 Rf3 Kc4 47 Rxf6 d3 48 Rf1 Ra2 (0-1)

And just half a point back of all those people, there was more action.

John Meyer (2417) - William Abbott (2140) Queen's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 b6 4 g3 Bb7 5 Bg2 Be7 6 Nc3 0-0 7 0-0 d5 8 Ne5 c5 9 Be3 Nc6 10 Nxc6 Bxc6 11 cd ed 12 Rc1 c4 13 Bg5 Rc8 14 Re1 Qd7 15 e4! de 16 d5 Bb7 17 Nxe4 Nxd5 18 Qh5 Bxg5 19 Qxg5 Rc7 20 Rcd1 Qd8 21 Qxd8 Rxd8 22 Nc3 (1-0)

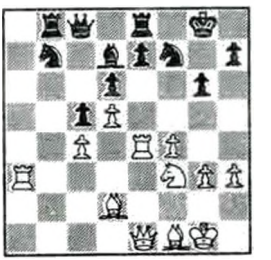
Just like that!

Another unpleasant surprise:

D Russ Wada (2308) - Harold Bogner (2106) King's Indian

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 0-0 5 Nf3 c5 6 0-0 Nc6 7 d4 d6 8 d5 Na5 9 Nd2 a6 10 a4 Rb8 11 e4 Bd7 12 Re1 Ng4 13 h3 N e5 14 Bf1 f5 15 f4 Nf7 16 Nf3 Bxc3?! 17 bc fe 18 Rxe4 b5 19 ab ab 20 cb Bxb5 21 c4 Bd7 22 Ra3 Re8 23 Bd2 Nb7 24 Qe1 Qc8

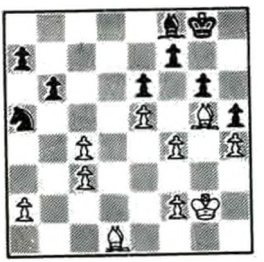
(Diagram)



Position after 24 .. Qc8

If Black's play up to now has been adventurous (not to say questionable), the last move is hara-kiri. He thinks he is recovering the e-pawn in White's h-pawn, with an attack - but White has seen one move further:

25 Rxe7 Rxe7 26 Qxe7 Bxh3?
27 Bxh3 Qxh3 28 Qxf7+! (1-0)



Position after 32 Bxd1

Atkin (1930) - C Lakdawala (2361)

And now, for those who think we are naught but chess philistines, interested only in combinations, we present a pair of finely played endings for your pleasure (Readers who fall asleep when the queens come off, kindly skip the next two games).

32 ... Nxc4 33 Bd8 Bc5 34 Kf3 Kf8 35 Ke2 Be7 36 Bxe7+ Kxe7 37 Bb3 Na5 38 Bc2 Nc6 39 Ke3 Kd8 40 Ke4 Ne7 41 Kf3 Nd5 42 c4

Ne7 43 Ke3 Kc7 44 Kd4 a6 45 Bd3 Nc6+ 46 Kc3 Ne7 47 Kb4 a5+ 48 Kb5 Nc6 49 Be4 Nd4+ 50 Ka4 Ne2 51 Bd3 Nxf4 52 B fl Kc6 53 Kb3 g5! 54 hg h4 (0-1)

H E Syrett (2135) - D Cress (1830)

(Position after 26 .. Rxb5)

27 Rc2 Rbl 28 Kf2 a4 29 Bcl Na5 30 Ke2 c4 31 d4 Nb3! 32 Bh6+

The more desirable 32 Ba3 is refuted by 32 .. ed.

32 ... Ke7 33 de Nxe5 34 Bg2 a3 35 Be3 Rb2 36 Kdl Rbl+ 37 Ke2 Nd3! 38 Bd2? Rb2 (0-1)

And now, SLEEPERS AWAKE!!!

Romulo Fuentes (2169) - James Huddleston (2000) Dragon

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Be2 g6 7 Be3 Bg7 8 Qd2 0-0 9 h4 h5 10 0-0-0 Nc6 11 Rdgl Bd7 12 f3 Ne5

And thus, by a strange route, an almost normal-looking Yugoslav has been reached.

13 Bh6 Rc8 14 g4 Nc4 15 Bxc4 Rxc4 16 gh!? Rxd4

Oops! Has White miscalculated?

17 Qxd4 Bxh6+ 18 Kbl Nxh5 19 Qd5!

No - the double threat of 20 Qxh5 and 20 Rxg6+ recovers the piece, with an attack for White.

19 ... Qb6 20 Qxh5 Bg7 21 Qd5 Be6

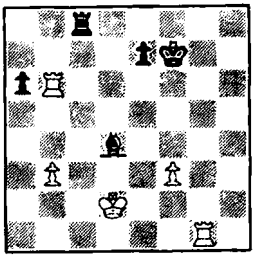
Not 21 .. Bxc3?? 22 Rxg6+ Bg7 23 Rxg7+ and mates.

22 Qd2 Qa5 23 h5 Bxa2+ 24 Kcl Bc4 25 Nbl Qal 26 c3 Ba2 27 Kc2 Bxbl 28 Rxbl Qa4+ 29 b3 Qa5 30 Ral Qe5 31 Ra4 b5 32 Rd4 Rc8 33 Kdl b4 34 Rxb4 Qg3 35 Qe3 d5 36 Rgl Qd6

37 Rb6 Qd8 38 e5 Bxe5 39 hg d4 40 gf+ Kxf7 41 Qh6 dc+ 42 Kc2 Qd2+! 43 Qxd2 cd+ 44 Kxd2 Bd4! (Diagram)

Wow! Certainly one of the most hair-raising middlegames I've ever seen!

45 Rgg6 Rd8+ 46 Kc2 Bxb6 47 Rxb6 Ra8 48 Kc3 a5, and the game was shortly drawn ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$, 53)



Position after .. Bd4

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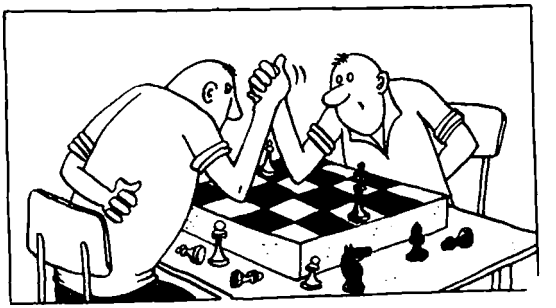


"I said, 'No draw!!'"

- Cartoon from 64

Intermezzo

U S Opens are scheduled from Sunday night's opening round to Friday night the following week, when Round 12 is played to wind up the whole shebang. That leaves a day with no play - and that's done deliberately. No game is scheduled for the middle Saturday, and Round 7 is not until the usual starting time of 8 pm Sunday. That gives Open participants a whole weekend, practically, to do whatever comes to mind.

The Powers That Be in U S chess - generally known by the geographical collective noun, "New Windsor" - hope that some, at least, of the participants will also be Delegates, and will use the hiatus in their playing schedules to attend the Delegates' Meeting. I did that at my second U S Open (at my first, I was on my honeymoon), and my record at that Meeting ensured that Michigan's officers would never again select me to be a Delegate. So I, for one, make myself scarce from the meetings. It may be that a later edition of this book will contain a special section, devoted to all the momentous matters settled in three days (yes, three days) of Delegatory debate. For the present, let's just say we consider this book to be devoted to the chess of the U S Open; let the reader who is hungry for news of the political wars consult his local Delegate.

For this particular Open, I was fortunate to have a second cousin living in Hayward, some ten miles north and across the Bay. An impromptu "family reunion" was held, all weekend long, in and about Hayward and its tributary villages; Sunday night, I returned, somewhat woozy, to the Caban - er, I mean the Hyatt.

The U S Open Speed Championship was practically the only noteworthy event held over the weekend. The scores in the Final :

Gurevich 8-2 (lost to Shirazi & Bisguier), Shirazi $7\frac{1}{2}$, Bisguier 7, Thinnsen $6\frac{1}{2}$, Grefe 6, J Meyer & Bill Chesney 5, Mike Brooks $4\frac{1}{2}$, Craig Mar 3, Steven Feldman $2\frac{1}{2}$, and poor Steve Smithers 0-10 (somebody has to finish last!)

*

Round Seven

The star attraction tonight was, of course, Board One: Shirazi - Christiansen. Would the Incredible Iranian add a GM scalp to his growing collection, and extend his six-game winning streak into the Open's second week?

Well, no. The young Grandmaster, already a former U S Champion, manfully resisted all of White's efforts to lure him into the type of wild, wide-open game Shirazi feels at home in. Instead, he played for consolidation, improving his position, and control of the center almost from the very opening. Finally, there was a sharp tactical flareup in the center, but it was in a position where Black, not White, held all the trumps. After having secured a material advantage to go with his positional superiority, Christiansen gradually converted his plusses to an endgame win. It's not a flashy game, and it's a very long one; but it's well worth careful study.

IM Kamran Shirazi - GM Larry Christiansen Pirc

1 e4 d6 2 d4 g6 3 f4 Bg7 4 Nf3 Nf6 5 e5 Nfd7 6 Nc3 c5 7 e6 fe 8 Ng5 Nf6!

ECO recommends taking the bull by the horns, thus: 8 .. Bxd4 9 Nxe6 Bxc3+ 10 bc Qa5 11 Bd2 Nf6 ∓. You can believe that if you want to; evidently Christiansen doesn't set much store by it. (Interestingly, Robert Byrne, annotating this game for his column in the New York Times, gives 11 .. Na6? 12 c4 Qb6 13 Bc3, "with an attack")

9 dc Nc6 10 cd ed 11 Bc4 d5 12 Bb3 0-0

Another interesting footnote: Shirazi - Matzner, played a few months prior to this Open, continued: 12 .. Qb6 13 Qe2 Nc6 14 Na4 Qc7 15 Be3 e5 16 0-0-0 ef 17 Bc5 Rd8 18 Nc3 f3 19 Nx d5! Nxd5 20 Rxd5 Bxb2+ 21 Kxb2 fe 22 Rd7+! (1-0)

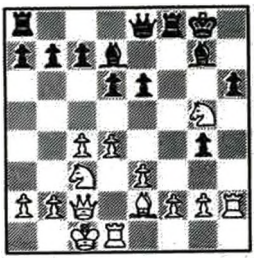
13 0-0 Kh8 14 Kh1 d4 15 Ne2 Nd5 16 c3 dc 17 bc h6! 18 Ne4 b6 19 Rf3 Ba6 20 Ba3 Rf7 21 Nd6 Rd7 22 Ng3 Rxd6 23 Bxd6 Qxd6 24 c4 Nd4! 25 Ne4 Qe7 26 cd ed 27 Nc3 Nxf3 28 Nxd5 Qh4 29 gf Re8 30 Qg1 Be2 31 Kg2 Qh5 32 Rf1 Bxf1+ 33 Qxf1 Qh4 34 Qd3 Qe1 35 Bc4 Rc8 36 Bb3 Rc1 37 Bc4 Rd1 38 Qe3 Rd2+ 39 Kh3 Qxe3 40 Nxe3 Bd4 41 Nd5 Bg1 42 Ne7 Kg7 43 f5 gf

44 Nxf5+ Kf6 45 Ng3 Ke5 46 Ne2 Be3 47 a4 Bf4 48 Bb5 h5 49 Kh4 Bxh2 50 Kxh5 Rd6 51 Kg5 Kd5 52 f4 Kc5 53 f5 Be5 54 Nc1 Bf6+ 55 Kg4 Kb4 56 Nd3+ Ka5 57 Nf4 a6 58 Be8 Rd8 59 Bc6 Rd4 60 Kf3 Rd6 61 Be8 Kb4 62 Ke4 Rd4+ 63 Ke3 Rd8 64 Bc6 Bg5 65 Kf3 Bxf4 66 Kxf4 Kc5 67 Bb7 b5 68 ab ab 69 f6 b4 70 Be4 Kd6 71 Kf5 b3 72 Kg6 Ke5 (0-1)

With the last of the perfect scores now gone, that meant that any one of the dozen people inhabiting the next few boards who won could, at least temporarily, share in first place. Not a few gave it their best shot, and some succeeded.

Dmitri Gurevich - GM Peter Biyiasas King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nf3 Bg7 4 Nc3 0-0 5 Bg5 d6 6 e3 Nbd7 7 Be3 h6 8 Bh4 g5 9 Bg3 Nh5 10 Qc2 e6 11 Nd2 Nxg3 12 hg f5 13 g4!? Nf6 14 0-0-0?! Nxg4 15 Bxg4 fg 16 Nde4 Bd7 17 Rh2 Qe8 18 Nxg5!? (Diagram)



Position after 18Nxg5

Once again, Gurevich cheerfully admitted to me after the game that he knew he was busted here, and that the sacrifice, if accepted, was only good for a draw, at best. Black is unwilling to settle for it, however, and winds up losing.

18 ...Rf5 19 Nge4 Qf7 20 f3 Rh5 21 Rxh5 Qxh5 22 Ng3 Qg5 23 f4 Qh4 24 Nce4 Qe7 25 Qe2 Qf7 26 Qxg4 e5 27 Nf6+ Qxf6 28 Qxd7 ed 29 Nh5 Qf7 30 Qxf7+ Kxf7 31 Nxg7 Kxg7 32 Rxd4 Kf6 33 Kd1 Rg8 34 Rd2 Kf5 35 Ke1 h5 36 Kf2 h4 37 Rd5+ Ke4 38 Rh5 (1-0)

Soltis' patented treatment of the Vienna apparently almost backfired tonight. Richard Lobo came out of some lengthy maneuvering with what looked suspiciously like the better position (the less vulnerable c-pawn), but hung a rook just before the time-control (probably in a scramble).

GM Andrew Soltis - Richard Lobo Vienna

1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 Bc5 4 Bg2 0-0 5 d3 c6 6 Nf3 d6 7 0-0 Nbd7 8 Na4 Bb4 9 a3 Ba5 10 b4 Bc7 11 c4 Re8 12 Bb2 Nb6 13 Nc3 a5 14 Nd2 Ng4 15 h3 ab 16 ab Rxa1 17 Qxa1 Nh6 18 g4

f6 19 Ne2 Be6 20 Nb3 Qe7 21 Na5 Ra8 22 Q d1 Bd8 23 Bc3 Qc7 24 Qd2 Na4 25 Ba1 c5 26 Nb3 b5 27 Rc1 bc 28 dc Nb6 29 bc dc 30 Ng3 Nf7 31 Bf1 Ra4 32 Qe3 Be7 33 Nd2 Bf8 34 Qb3 Rb4 35 Qc2 g6 36 Bc3 Ra4 37 Rb1 Ra6 38 Be2 Bh6 39 Ngf1 Nd6 40 Qd3 Ra3 41 Ne3 Bxe3 42 Qxe3 Nbxc4 43 Nxc4 Bxc4 44 Bxc4+ Nxc4 45 Qd3 Qf7 46 Rb5 Ra7 47 Rxc5 Rc7 48 Qd8+ (1-0)

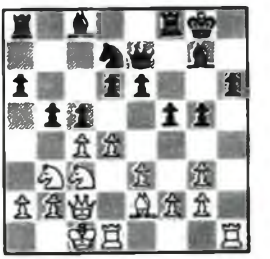
Andy (What, me worry?) Soltis

IM John Grefe took the same opening as in Gurevich - Biyiasas, and made it pay for Black.

James Thinnsen - IM John Grefe King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 g6 3 c4 Bg7 4 Nc3 d6 5 Bf4 Nh5 6 Bg5 h6 7 Bh4 g5 8 Bg3 f5 9 e3 e6 10 Nd2 Nxg3 11 hg 0-0 12 Qc2 Nd7 13 Bd3 a6 14 0-0-0 c5 15 Nb3 Qe7 16 Be2 b5! (Diagram)

17 Bf3 Ra7 18 g4 fg 19 Bxg4 Nf6 20 Be2 bc 21 Na5 cd 22 Rxd4 Q c7 23 Nxc4 d5 24 Nd2 Bd7 25 f4 Rc8 26 Kb1 Qb6 27 fg hg 28 Nb3 e5 29 Rxd5 Rxc3! 30 bc Nd5 31 Bc4 Be6 32 Qg6 Nf6 33 Qf5 Bxc4 34 Qc8+ Kf7 35 Qxc4+ Ke7 (0-1)



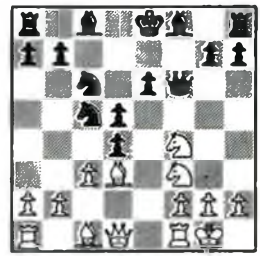
Position after 16 .. b5

Shapiro and Silman had a long draw, while Kudrin and Root had a relatively short one.

IM Sergey Kudrin - FM Doug Root French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Bd3 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Ne2 f6 8 Nf4 Qe7 9 ef Qxf6 10 Nf3 cd 11 0-0 Nc5

(Diagram)



Position after 11 .. Nc5

A curious moment. ECO calls the last move a mistake (they prefer 11 .. Nde5), and say 12 Re1!, with threats of Nxe6 and Nxd5, is the 'refutation'. Is 11 .. Nxd3 the answer? Or did Root know something ECO didn't?

At any rate, Kudrin deviated with 12 Nh5 Qe7 13 cd, and soon enough found himself in trouble:

13 ... Nxd3 14 Qxd3 Qf7 15 Nf4 Be7 16 Qe2 0-0 17 Nd3 Bf6 18 Nde5 Bxe5 19 de b6 20 b3 a5 21 Qd2 Ba6 22 Re1 Qg6 23 Q g5 Rxf3! 24 Qxg6 hg 25 gf Nd4 26 Be3 Nxf3+ 27 Kg2 Nxe1+ 28 Rxe1 a4 29 Rc1 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Thus, Christiansen, Soltis, Gurevich and Grefe now shared the lead with $6\frac{1}{2}$ points, followed by Shirazi and quite a few others with 6.

Among those "others" was, of course, Florin the Indomitable, inching his way back up to the top ranks after a less than auspicious start. Tonight's "inch" came at the expense of last week's hero, CM Paul Carrasco (at right). As you will see from the game, Paul went down fighting; but go down he did.

Paul Carrasco (NV)

CM Paul Carrasco - GM Florin Gheorghiu Hippo

1 Nf3 c5 2 c4 Nf6 3 g3 b6 4 Bg2 Bb7 5 0-0 e6 6 Nc3 Be7 7 d3 0-0 8 e4 d6 9 h3 a6 10 Be3 Nc6 11 d4 cd 12 Nxd4 Nxd4 13 Qxd4 Nd7 14 Rfd1 Rb8 15 Rac1 Qc7 16 Qd2 Rfd8 17 Nd5!? ed 18 cd N c5 19 b4 Bc8 20 f4 f6 21 Kh2 Bf8 22 bc bc 23 Rc2 Bd7 24 Rdc1 Re8 25 e5! fe 26 fe Bf5 27 Rc3 Rxe5 28 Bf4 Ree8 29 Rxc5 Qf7

(Diagram)

Paul's Position Paul's Opposition

Which Will Win?!

30 Rc7 Qf6 31 R1c3 Be4 32 Bxe4 Rxe4 33 R7c4 Ree8 34 Rb3 h6 35 h4 Rxb3 36 ab Qf5 37 Be3 Qf3 38 Rc3 Re5 39 Rd3 g5 40 hg`hg 41 Qg2! Qf5 42 Qd2 Qf3 43 Qg2 Qg4 44 Bf2 Qh5+ 45 Kg1 g4 46 Be3 Qf5 47 Qd2 Qe4 48 Bg5 Bg7 49 Rd4 Qf3 50 Rd3 Qe4 51 Be3 Rh5 (0-1)

Oh well - it was fun while it lasted, wasn't it?

GM Tarjan fell even further off the pace with this, his third draw.

Tom Algeo (2248) - GM James Tarjan (2623) Q-Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 a3 d5 5 cd ed 6 Nc3 Be7 7 Bg5 Nbd7 8 e3 Bb7 9 Bd3 0-0 10 0-0 c5 11 Qc2 Ne4 12 Bxe7 Qxe7

13 Nd2 f5 14 Rael Qf6 15 Bb5 Rfd8 16 Bxd7 Rxd7 17 Ndxe4 fe 18 dc bc 19 Rdl Rc8 20 Nxe4!? Qf5 21 Qa4 Bc6 22 Qa6! Bb7 23 Qa4 Bc6 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$) - a curious perpetual, indeed!

IM Nick deFirmian was more successful, squeezing out the following win over Ron (P-QN3) Snyder (who never did play .. P-QN3 in this game).

DeFirmian - Snyder King's Indian

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 b3 g6 3 Bb2 Bg7 4 g3 0-0 5 Bg2 d6 6 d4 e5 7 de Ng4 8 Nc3 Nxe5 9 Nxe5 Bxe5 10 Qd2 Nd7 11 h4 Nc5 12 h5 Be6 13 0-0-0 a5 14 f4 Bg7 15 Bh3 Qd7 16 Nd5 Ne4 17 Qe3 Bxb2+ 18 Kxb2 f5 19 hg hg 20 Nc3 Nxc3 21 Qxc3 Qg7 22 Bg2 Qxc3+ 23 Kxc3 Rab8 24 Rh6 Kg7 25 Rlhl Bf7 26 e4 Rfe8 27 Kd3 fe+ 28 Bxe4 d5 29 Bf3 Re7 30 Rh7+ Kf6 31 g4 Rbe8 32 Kd2 c5 33 g5+ Kf5 34 Rlh4 Ke6 35 Be2 Kd6 36 Bb5 Rg8 37 R4h6 B e6 38 Bd3 Rxh7 39 Rxh7 c4 40 bc dc 41 Be4 b5 42 Ra7 Kc5

This looks like a time-pressure blunder, but it's not: if .. a4 instead, then 43 Ra6+ Ke7 44 Rb6 wins the b-pawn.

43 Rxa5 Kd4 44 Bc6 c3+ 45 Ke2 Rh8 46 Bxb5 Rh2+ 47 Kf3 Rxc2 48 Ra4+ Kc5 49 Bd3 Rb2 50 Bxg6 Bxa2 51 Ra5+ Kd6 52 Ra6+ Kc5 53 Be4 Bd5 54 Bxd5 Kxd5 55 Ra8 Rh2 56 g6 Rh3+ 57 Kg4 Rh2 58 Kf5 c2 59 Rd8+ Kc6 60 g7 Rh5+ 61 Ke4 (1-0)

A board or two down the line, another master was beginning to attract attention: John Meyer of Washington, DC. Like the tennis-playing Mayers, John Meyer is half of a chessplaying "brother act": his brother, Eugene, was once mentioned as a strong candidate for an IM title. These days, however, John is the more active of the two.

He shares a taste for suspenders with Dr Bur-

ger of New York; but where Dr Burger is large and patient, John is thin, almost wispy, and nervously energetic. Several examples of Dr. Burger's play given so far have shown how he builds his game solidly, waiting for an opening to present itself; John Meyer, by contrast, prefers sharp openings, adventurous middlegames. The following is a good example.

John Peterson (2193) - John Meyer (2417) K-Indian

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 g6 3 d4 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Be2 0-0 6 Bg5 c5 7 d5 h6 8 Be3 b5!? 9 cb a6

"Benko-ization" appears, from this game at least, to be perfectly justifiable. Black gets all the play, from here to the end.

10 ba Qb6 11 Rb1 Bxa6 12 h3 Qb4 13 a3 Bxe2 14 Nxe2 Qa5 15 0-0 Nbd7 16 f4 Rfb8 17 Ng3 Rb7 18 Qc2 Rab8 19 Bd2 Rb3 20 Nd1 Qb5 21 Bc3 h5 22 Ne2 Qc4 23 Nc1 R3b7 24 Nf2 Ne8 25 Ne2 Nc7 26 Qd3 Qxd3 27 Nxd3 Rb3 28 Rfd1 Bxc3 29 Nxc3 Nb5 30 Nxb5 R8xb5 31 Rbc1 Nb6 32 Rd2 c4 33 Nb4 Re3 34 Nc6 Rxe4 35 a4 Nxa4 36 Rdc2 Nb6 (0-1)

Perry Sill (2163) - D Russ Wada (2308) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 f4 g6 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 Bb5 Nd4 6 Nxd4 cd 7 Ne2 a6 8 Bd3 d6 9 0-0 Bg4 10 c3 Bxe2 11 Qxe2 Qb6 12 Kh1 Nf6 13 a4 Nd7 14 a5 Qc6 15 b4 dc 16 b5 ab 17 Bxb5 Qc7 18 dc Bxc3 19 Ra3 Bg7 20 e5 0-0 21 ed ed 22 Qe7 Rac8! 23 Raf3 Nf6 24 Qe1 Qc5 25 Bd3 Rfe8

A difficult position. Black is a pawn ahead, but White has a persistent initiative, which eventually leads to the recovery of the pawn. But then comes time-pressure ...

26 Qd1 h6 27 Qb3 Qd5 28 Qb4 Ne4 29 Bb2 Bxb2 30 Qxb2 Nc5 31 Bb1 Ne4 32 f5 g5 33 h3 Qe5 34 Qxe5 Rxe5 35 Bxe4 Rxe4 36 Rb1 Rc7 37 Rd3 Rd7 38 Rb6 Ra4 39 Rdxd6 Rxd6 40 Rxd6 Rxa5 41 Rxh6 Ra6! 42 f6 Ra5 43 Kh2 b5 44 h4! b4 45 hg b3 46 Rh4? (g6!) Rb5! 47 g6 fg 48 f7+ Kxf7 49 Rf4+ Kg7 50 Rf1 b2 51 Rb1 Rb3 52 g3 Kf6 53 Kh3 Kg5 54 Kg2 Kg4 55 Kf2 g5 (0-1)

Zugzwang: White must lose his pawn with check.

And now, just in case you're getting tired of watching the Big Guys run rampant, here's a game where the underdog triumphs:

Kurt Stein (2169)- William Batchelder (2377) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 a6 5 Be3 Nf6 6 Nc3 Bb4 7 Bd3 Qc7 8 Nde2 d5 9 0-0 Nc6 10 ed Nxd5 11 Nxd5 ed 12 Nf4 Ne7 13 Qf3 Bd6 14 Nxd5 Nxd5 15 Qxd5 Bxh2+ 16 Khl Be6 17 Qc5! Qx c5 18 Bxc5 Be5 19 f4 Rc8 20 Ba3 Bd4 21 f5 Bd5 22 Rfe1+

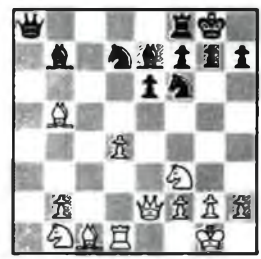
Curious how White can exploit his advantage - better development, Black's king in the center - even in the endgame!

22 ... Kd8 23 c3 Bb6 24 c4! Rc6 (threatening mate!) 25 f6! B xc4 26 Be7+ Kd7 27 Be4 gf 28 Rad1+ Kc7 29 Bxc6 bc 30 Bxf6 Rg8 31 Re7+ Kc8 32 Re5 Bxa2 33 Rc1 Kd7 34 Re7+ Kd6 35 Rd1+ Bd5 36 Rb7 Bf2 37 Rd2 c5 38 Ra7 Bd4 39 Rxa6+Bc6 40 Bxd4 cd 41 Rxd4+ Kc5 42 Rd2 Bb5 43 Rf6 Bc4 44 Rc2 Kb5 45 Rf5+ Kb4 46 Rf4 Rc8 47 Rc3 Rc5 48 Kg1 Kb5 49 Kf2 f5 50 Ke3 Re5+ 51 Kf2 Bd5 52 Re3 Be4 53 g4 Rc5 54 Rb3+ Ka6 55 Ke3 Re5 56 Kd4 Rd5+ 57 Kc4 Re5 58 Rh3 fg 59 Ra3+ Kb6 60 Kd4 (1-0)

In our next game, Black sacrifices a pawn in the opening, but manages to hold his higher-rated opponent to a half-point by dint of his powerful grip on the light squares.

J Kastner(2344) - R Lemon (2145) QGA

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 c4 dc 4 e3 e6 5 Bxc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 Qe2 b5 8 Bd3 Bb7 9 Rd1 Nbd7 10 a4 cd 11 ed Be7 12 ab ab 13 Rxa8 Qxa8 14 Bxb5 0-0 (Diagram)



Position after 14 .. 0-0

ECO gives only 10 .. c4. Black appears, however, to get quite a good game out of this pawn sacrifice. TN!

15 Ne5 Nb6 16 f3 Bd5 17 Nc3 Bb3 18 Re1 Rc8 19 Bd3 Nbd5 20 Nxd5 Qxd5 21 Be3 Bd8 22 Qf2 Bb6 23 Q h4 Qd8 24 Ng4 h6! 25 Nxf6+ Qxf6 26 Qxf6 gf 27 Ra1 e5 28 Ra6 Bxd4 29 Bxd4 ed 30 Rd6 Bc2 31 Bf1 Rb8 32 Rxd4 Rxb2 33 Rd2 Ra2 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Edgar McCormick has, "to the best of his recollection", attended not less than twenty-eight U S Opens - and played the same brand of wide-open, fun-loving chess at every one of them. His rating isn't quite what it used to be, perhaps; but then, one must make some allowances for age!

Edgar McCormick (2117) - John Rykowski (1937) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 c3 e6 3 d4 d5 4 ed ed 5 Bb5+ Nc6 6 Nf3 Bd6 7 0-0 Nge7 8 Nbd2 0-0 9 dc Bxc5 10 Nb3 Bb6 11 Bg5 f6 12 Bh4 Nf5 13 Bd3 Nxh4 14 Nxh4 Ne5 15 Bc2 Bg4 16 Qb1 g6 17 Re1 Qc7 18 Nd4 Bxd4 19 cd Nc6 20 Bb3 Rad8 21 Qe4! Bc8 22 Bxd5+ Kh8 23 Bxc6 bc 24 Rac1 Qb6 25 Rxc6 Qxb2 26 Rc7 Qb4 27 Nx g6+ Kg8 28 Ne7+ (1-0)

And lastly, a 'Mad Russian' story, followed by a few games from the Lower Depths.

Vitaly Radaikin, the 'Mad Russian', came back for the 1981 US Open - I hadn't heard from him since Snowmass. Anyway, he managed to stay, if not out of sight, at least out of trouble, until the 7th round. Then a complaint was lodged by his opponent, an A-player who shall remain nameless for this account, that Radaikin had tampered with his clock, causing him to forfeit his 7th-round game. A jury was duly formed to investigate the charges; witnesses were called who testified that they had not seen Radaikin touch the clock during the period of time-pressure. No matter, averred his opponent:"We went from one minute for him and nine minutes for me, to one minute for him and none for me. I say he did it!" The jury, forced to choose between declaring Vitaly the new Uri Geller (bending flags?!), and letting the forfeit stand, naturally chose the latter.

Richard Burchett (2104) - Richard Linden (1917) Nimzo-Ind

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 a3 Bxc3+ 5 bc b6 6 f3 0-0 7 e4 d6 8 Bd3 e5 9 Ne2 h6 10 Be3 Nc6 11 0-0 Ba6 12 Ng3 Ne7 13 f4 ef 14 Bxf4 Ng6 15 Bc1 Re8 16 Nh5! Nxh5 17 Qxh5 Qh4 18 Qf5 Qe7 19 Ra2 Bc8 20 Qf3 Rf8 21 e5 Bd7 22 ed Qxd6 23 Raf2 Bc6 24 Qh5 Rae8 25 Bxh6! gh 26 d5 Bd7 27 Rf6 Qc5+ 28 Kh1 Re7 29 Bxg6 fg 30 Rxf8+ Kg7 31 Qe5+ (1-0)

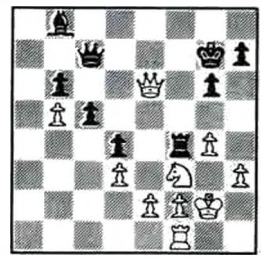
In our next game, an unusual opening leads to a wild and woolly middlegame.

John Spargo (2035) - Stewart Scott (2231) Bird's

1 f4 c5 2 b3 Nf6 3 Bb2 Nc6 4 Nf3 d5 5 e3 e6 6 Bb5 Bd7 7 Bx c6 Bxc6 8 Ne5 Qc7 9 0-0 Bd6 10 d3 Nd7 11 Nxc6 Qxc6 12 Qg4 0-0-0 13 Nd2 Rhg8 14 Qh5 f6 15 e4 g6 16 ed ed 17 Qxh7 g5 18 fg Rh8 19 Qf5 Bxh2+ 20 Kf2 fg 21 Bxh8 Rf8 22 Qxf8+ Nxf8 23 Nf3 Bf4 24 g3 Bc7 25 Rael Ng6 26 Rhl g4 27 Nd2 Qd6 28 Ke2 Qxg3 (0-1)

T C Hartwell (1769) - Harry Bell (1972) English

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Nc3 0-0 5 Bg2 d6 6 0-0 e5 7 d3 Nh5 8 Bd2 f5 9 Rbl f4 10 Ne4 c6 11 Bb4 c5 12 Bc3 Nc6 13 a3 a5 14 b4 ab 15 ab b6 16 b5 Nd4 17 Nxd4 ed 18 Bd2 Ra7 19 Ral Rxal 20 Qxal Be6 21 Qa6 d5 22 cd Bxd5 23 g4 f3! 24 Bxf3 N f4 25 Bxf4 Rxf4 26 h3 Be5 27 Nd2 Bxf3 28 Nxf3 Bb8 29 Qa2+ Kg7 30 Qe6 Qc7 31 Kg2 (Diagram)



Position after 31 Kg2

At this point, White probably heaved a sigh of relief - who wouldn't? His queen is active, he's a pawn up, and Black's attack appears to be con - tained.

At this point, Black announced mate in 12 (actually, 13) :

31 .. Rxf3! 32 Kxf3 Qf4+ 33 Kg2 Qh2+ 34 Kf3 Qxh3+ 35 Ke4 Qg2+ 36 f3 Qxe2+ 37 Kd5 Qa2+ - you can work out the rest!

One final word (spotted on a T-shirt at Stanford) :

Smith College, 1875-1975
A Half-Century Of
Women On Top

Round Eight

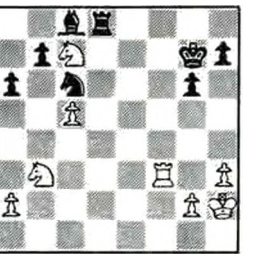
Once back in the lead, Christiansen hung on to it, taking a point from Gurevich in a long, bitterly fought endgame.

GM Christiansen - FM Gurevich Accel. Fianchetto

1 c4 c5 2 Nf3 g6 3 d4 Bg7 4 c4 Qa5+ 5 Bd2 Qb6 6 Bc3 cd 7 Nxd4 Nf6 8 Nd2 d6 9 Be2 0-0 10 0-0 Nbd7 11 b4 Nh5 12 N2b3 Nf4 13 Rel Nxe2+ 14 Qxe2 Ne5 15 h3 Qc7 16 c5 dc 17 bc Nc6 18 Nb5 Qf4 19 Bxg7 Kxg7 20 Nc3 Qg5 21 Nd5! Be6

21 .. Bh3 looks more natural, but then comes 22 f4 Qg4 23 Qb2+ and 24 Re3.

22 f4 Qh4 23 Radl Rad8 24 Rfl f5 25 Nc7 Qf6 26 ef Bxf5 27 Kh2 Bc8 28 Rdel a6 29 Qf3 e5! 30 fe Qxe5 31 Rxe5 Rxf3 32 Re7+ Nxe7 33 Rxf3 Nc6 (Diagram)



Position after 33..Nc6

Black has managed to escape from a difficult middlegame into an ending that, while inferior for him, will be hard for White to win, handicapped as he is by his weak queenside pawns.

34 Re3 Kf7 35 g4 h5 36 Kg3 hg 37 hg Nd4 38 Na5 Nb5 39 Nxb5 ab 40 Nb3 g5 41 Re4 Rd3+ 42 Kf2 Be6 43 Rb4 Bc4 44 Na5 Rd2+ 45 Ke3 Rxa2 46 Nxc4 bc 47 Rxb7+ Ke6 48 Kd4 Ra4 (perhaps 48..Rg2?! at once?) 49 Rb6+ Kd7 50 Kc3 Ra3+ 51 Kxc4 Rg3 52 Rd6+ Kc7 53 Rd4 Kc6 54 Re4 Rgl 55 Kd4 Rdl+ 56 Ke5 Rfl 57 Rd4 Rf8 58 Rd6+ Kxc5 59 Rg6 Re8+ 60 Kf6 Kd6 61 Rxg5 Rf8+ 62 Kg7 Rf4 63 Rg6+ Ke7 64 g5 Rf5 65 Kh6 (1-0)

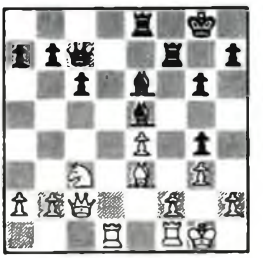
Now I can curl up with the appropriate chapters of Smyslov & Levenfish's Rook Endings, to try to figure out why Black resigned!

The other two $6\frac{1}{2}$-pointers, Grefe and Soltis, tried conclusions on Board 2. Here, it was the lower-ranked Grefe who upset the higher-ranked and rated Soltis, in a seesaw battle out of Soltis' favorite King's Indian Defense, to move into a tie for first with Christiansen.

IM John Grefe - GM Andrew Soltis King's Indian

With a slightly inferior (perhaps misplayed?) position, Black gives up a pawn for counterplay that never materializes; his troubles, exacerbated by time-pressure, quickly overwhelm him.

1 c4 g6 2 d4 Bg7 3 Nc3 d6 4 e4 Nd7 5 Nf3 e5 6 Be2 Ngf6 7 0-0 0-0 8 Be3 c6 9 Qc2 Ng4 10 Bg5 f6 11 Bc1 f5 12 de Ndxe5 13 Nxe5 Bxe5 14 Bxg4 fg 15 Be3 Be6 16 c5 dc 17 Bxc5 Rf7 18 Rad1 Qc7 19 g3 Re8 20 Be3 (Diagram)



Position after 20 Be3

Had you asked me (or, for that matter, any of a number of masters watching this game on the demo board), I would have told you: Black for choice here, with the two bishops, queenside majority, and weak e-pawn to work on. 20 .. b5 looks good. Whether Soltis' plan is any better or worse than mine is for better heads than this one to guess ...

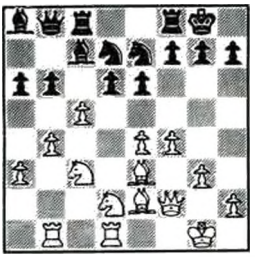
20 ... Qa5 21 Na4 Qb4 22 b3 Bg7 23 Bxa7 Bd7 24 Rfe1 b5 25 B c5 Qa5 26 Nb6 Be6 27 a4 ba 28 Nxa4 Qb5 29 b4 Rf3 30 Re3 Ra8 31 Nb6 Rb8 32 Rd6 Bf7 33 Qd1 Re8 34 Rxf3 gf 35 Qxf3 Bf8 36 N d7 Ra8 37 Nxf8 Bc4 38 Nd7 Be2 39 Nf6+ Kh8 40 Qc3 Qc4 41 Rd7 (1-0)

Thus the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. In Swiss-system terms, that means two of those who had $6\frac{1}{2}$ points yesterday now have $7\frac{1}{2}$, and lead the tournament; while the two who lost to them now have "only" $6\frac{1}{2}$, and fall behind the 6-pointers who won (who were behind them yesterday). There were five winners in the 6-point group (now with 7 points): Gheorghiu, Russ Wada, deFirmian, Silman and Meyer.

A resurgent Gheorghiu vaulted back to within striking distance at the expense of Master Shapiro, who essayed the Hippo Defense against him, one of Gheorghiu's pet lines. It's a strategy that frequently gives good results, when one's opponent is unwilling to employ the "best" lines against his own systems. Not so here, unfortunately: Gheorghiu came up with a novel, and very strong, method of dealing with the hitherto almost unbeatable Hippo: a queenside breakthrough.

GM Florin Gheorghiu - Dan Shapiro Hippo

1 c4 c5 2 Nf3 b6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Bb7 5 Nc3 Nf6 6 f3 d6 7 e4 a6 8 Be2 e6 9 0-0 Be7 10 Be3 0-0 11 Qe1 Nbd7 12 Qf2 Rc8 13 Racl Qc7 14 b4 Qb8 15 a3 Bd8 16 Rfdl Bc7 17 g3 Ne5 18 N b3 Ba8 19 Bd4 Nfd7 20 f4 Ng6 21 Be3 Nf6 22 Nd2 Nd7 23 Rbl Ne7 24 c5! (Diagram)



Position after 24 c5

24 ... b5 25 a4! dc 26 ab cb 27 ba Bb6 28 Na2 Bxe3 29 Qxe3 Nc6 30 N c4 Rc7 31 Rb2 e5 32 fe Re8 33 Nxb4 Nxb4 34 Rdbl Nc5 35 Rxb4 Qa7 36 Nd6 (1-0)

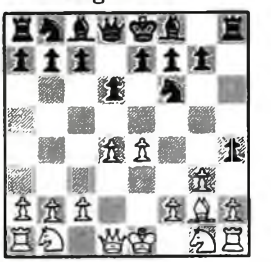
The unanswerable threat is 37 Nb5.

And now, we bring you one of the hairiest games of Palo Alto, as the U S Open's first-half hero tries to recoup at the expense of one of the "lesser lights" - only to find that he has caught himself a Tartar!

Russ Wada - IM Kamran Shirazi Irregular!?

1 e4 d6 2 g3 Nf6 3 Bg2 h5!? 4 d4 h4

(Diagram)



Position after 4 .. h4

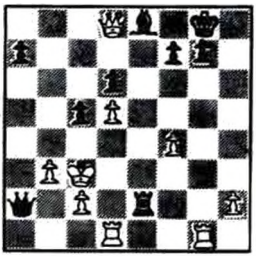
California's Wada has long been reckoned somewhat of an original as far as opening theory goes; he has certainly met his match here!

5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Bg5 Nh7?! 7 Be3 (7 Bxh4? g5) 7 ... e5 8 d5 Nd4 9 Bxd4 ed 10 Qxd4 Be7 11 0-0-0 (11 Qxg7?? Bf6) 11 ... 0-0 12 f4 c5 13 Qd3 b5! 14 Qxb5 Bg4 15 Bf3 Rb8 16 Qd3 Bd7 17 Nge2 Qa5 18 gh Bxh4 19 Qe3 Rb4 20 Rhgl Rfb8 21 b3 Qa3+ 22 Kd2 Re8 23 Bg4 Bb5 24 Bf5 Nf6 25 Qh3 Nxe4+!?

The culmination of Black's va banque strategy - but it just misses.

26 Nxe4 Rbxe4 27 Bxe4 Rxe4 28 Qxh4 Rxe2 29 Kc3 Qxa2 30 Qd8+ Be8

(Diagram)



Position after... Be8

Black has a most serious threat - but White has the move!

31 Rxg7+! Kxg7 32 Rgl+ Kf8 33 Qxd6+ Re7 34 Qh6 mate!

Ron Gross - IM Nick deFirmian English

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 c5 4 g3 cd 5 Nxd4 Nc6 6 Bg2 Qb6 7 Nb3 Bb4+ 8 Nc3 Qa6 9 0-0 Qxc4 10 Bf4 d5 11 Rcl Qa6 12 e4 Bxc3 13 ed Nxd5 14 Bxd5 ed 15 Bd6 Be5 16 Rel Be6 17 Nc5!? Qb6 18 Nxe6 fe 19 Qg4 Bxd6 20 Rxe6+ Ne7! 21 Qa4+ Kf7 22 Rcel Rh e8 23 Qh4 Ng6 (0-1)

Must be playing against Korchnoi that teaches you how to take such pawns - and live!

Meanwhile, Silman, who had spent 66 fruitless moves the day before trying unsuccessfully to wring a full point from Shapiro, now spent another 63 moves - but this time successfully - to squeeze the full point from Dave Mark.

Jeremy Silman - David Mark (2256) King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Be2 0-0 6 Bg5 c5 7 d5 Qa5 8 Bd2 e6 9 Nf3 ed 10 ed Nbd7 11 0-0 h6 12 h3 Ne8 13 Qc2 Qd8 14 a3 f5 15 b4 b6 16 Nh2 N7f6 17 Rael Bd7 18 f4 Nc7 19 K hl Nh7 20 g3 Qf6 21 Bd3 Rae8 22 bc bc 23 Rxe8 Rxe8 24 Rbl Bc8 25 Nf3 Qf7 26 Kg2 Nf8 27 Qa4 Ba6 28 Ndl Qd7 29 Qc2 N h7 30 Nh4 Nf8 31 Nf2 Qe7 32 Qa4 Kf7 33 Ba5 Bc8 34 Qc6 Na6 35 Rel Qd7 36 Rxe8 Kxe8 37 Qxd7+ Bxd7 38 g4 fg 39 hg g5 40 Nf5 Bxf5 41 Bxf5 gf 42 Bc8! Nb8 43 Bc7 Nbd7 44 Ne4 Be5 45 Nxd6+ Ke7 46 Nf5+ Kf6 47 Bd8+ Kg6 48 Be7 h5 49 gh+! Kx h5 50 Kf3 Kg6 51 Nd6 Bb2 52 a4 Bcl 53 a5 Ne5+ 54 Ke4 Nfd7 55 a6 Kh5 56 Nb5 Kg4 57 Bxc5 Kg3 58 Bxd7 Nxd7 59 Bxa7 f3 60 Nd4 Nf6+ 61 Kf5 Ng4 62 Nxf3 Kxf3 63 Bd4 (1-0)

When two well-booked masters get into a theoretical discussion, the result is generally a lot of flying wood - and a split point.

Robert Rowley - IM Sergey Kudrin Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 Be3 Bg7 7 f3 Nc6 8 Qd2 0-0 9 Bc4 Bd7 10 h4 Rc8 11 Bb3 h5

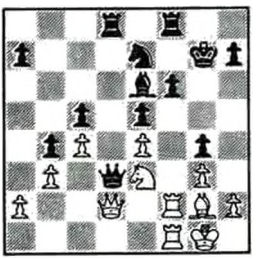
The supersharp line lately championed by Miles.

12 0-0-0 Ne5 13 Bg5 Rc5 14 Rhel b5 15 f4 Nc4 16 Bxc4 Rxc4 17 e5 b4 18 Qd3 Rxd4 19 Qxd4 bc 20 ef ef 21 Qxd6 fg 22 Qxd7 Qa5 23 Re8 Qxa2 24 Rxf8+ Bxf8 25 bc gf 26 Qe8 Qa3+ 27 Kbl Qxc3 28 Rd8 Qb4+ 29 Kcl Qa3+ 30 Kbl Qb4+ 31 Kcl Qa3+ 32 Kbl Qb4+ ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

There was a lot of activity one rung further down, too: in 5$\frac{1}{2}$-point territory.

GM Peter Biyiasas - Tom Algeo Closed Sicilian

1 e4 e6 2 d3 c5 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 g3 g6 5 Bg2 Bg7 6 0-0 Nge7 7 Nc3 0-0 8 Be3 Nd4 9 Qd2 d6 10 Bh6 e5 11 Bxg7 Kxg7 12 Nh4 f6 13 f4 Rb8 14 fe de 15 Rf2 Be6 16 Ndl Qd7 17 Ne3 Rbd8 18 b3 b5 19 c3 N4c6 20 Rdl b4 21 c4 Nd4 22 Rdfl g5 23 Nhf3 Nxf3+ 24 Rxf3 g4 25 R3f2 Qxd3 (Diagram)



Position after .. Qxd3

It looks bad for White, but all turns out well for the GM: he recovers his pawn soon enough, thanks to a cute bit of tactics; after which time-pressure makes a shambles of Black's position.

26 Qcl Qd6 27 Nd5 Ng8 28 Nxf6! Qd4 29 Khl Kg6 30 Nxg4 Rxf2 31 Nxf2 Qd2 32 Qal Qd4 33 Qbl Rf8 34 Qel Nh6 35 Qe2 a5 36 Bf3 Qc3 37 Ndl Qd4 38 Ne3 a4 39 ba Bc8 40 Kg2 Bb7 41 Nf5 Ba6?? (1-0)

James Maki (2244) - James Thinnsen (2429) Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 de 4 Nxe4 Bf5 5 Ng3 Bg6 6 h4 h6 7 Nf3 Nd7 8 h5 Bh7 9 Bd3 Bxd3 10 Qxd3 Ngf6 11 Bd2 e6 12 0-0-0 Qc7 13 Kbl c5 14 Ne4 0-0-0 15 Nc3 a6 16 Qe2 Nb6 17 Rh4 c4!?

This turns out very well, but I'm suspicious of releasing the

tension here.

18 Ne5 Bb4 19 Ne4 Bxd2 20 Qxd2 Nxe4 21 Rxe4 Nd5 22 c3 b5 23 Qe2 Rd6 24 Rel Kb8 25 Rg4?

Forced to choose a plan, White puts his rook out of play, where it soon gets into trouble.

25... f5 26 Rg3 Rc8 27 Qd2 Nf6 28 Rh3 a5 29 Ng6 Ne4 30 Q f4 b4 31 f3 Nf2 32 Qe5 bc 33 Re2 Nxh3 34 gh Rb6 35 Qxa5 Rx b2+ 36 Rxb2+ cb 37 Qb4+ Qb7 38 Qd6+ Ka8 39 Qa3+ Kb8 40 Q d6+ Rc7 41 Qf8+ Ka7 42 Qa3+ Qa6 43 Qc3 Rb7 44 Ne5 Qxa2+! (0-1)

Some masters (Silman comes to mind) generally stick to closed systems against lower-rated players, figuring that opening analysis is a weapon available to the low-rateds, too - and why not avoid as much of that as possible? The logic goes: being the stronger player, I should win the more easily, the sooner we are "out of the books" and on our own resources. Sound strategy, but more often than not dull chess.

Not so Jonathan Frankle. This young master - who bears a startling resemblance to Chevy Chase - is perfectly willing to follow long lines of analysis. His logic runs: why shouldn't I, the strong master with more years of experience, be better able to remember the book than my lower-rated opponent - hence, I win in the opening, rather than wait until the middle-game, like all my English-Opening colleagues.

Jonathan Frankle (2348) - Bill Chesney (2165) Vienna

1 e4 e5 2 Bc4 Nf6 3 Nc3 Nxe4 4 Qh5 Nd6 5 Bb3 Nc6 6 Nb5 g6 7 Qf3 f5 8 Qd5 Qe7 9 Nxc7+ Kd8 10 Nxa8 b6 11 d3! Bb7 12 h4 f4 13 Qf3 Nd4 14 Qg4 Bh6 15 c3 N4f5 16 Nf3 e4 17 Ng5 ed+ 18 Kfl f3 19 Nxf3 Qe2+ 20 Kgl Ne4 21 Bxh6 Nxh6 22 Qf4 Qxf2+ 23 Kh2 Re8 24 Rhfl Qc5 25 Ng5 Bxa8 26 Nxe4 Rxe4 27 Qb8+ (1-0)

And it worked, too! - even if the "book" line was 15 Nh3 N6 f5 16 Ng5, instead of 15 c3 ...

Bisguier is an old campaigner who places little faith in the latest opening marvels. He just develops his pieces, keeps them in play, and saves his thinking power for the game-breaking combination that, often as not, will come his way.

Arthur B: Just start me up ..

GM Bisguier -
Alciguel Ruiz (2230)

Grunfeld Defense

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 d5 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 e3 0-0 6 Qb3 c6 7 Bd2 b6 8 Bd3 Ba6 9 0-0 Nbd7 10 Radl e6 11 Bcl dc 12 Bxc4 Bxc4 13 Qxc4 Rc8 14 e4 Qc7 15 Rfel h6 16 h3 e5 17 de Nxe5 18 Nxe5 Qxe5 19 f4 Qe6 20 Qd3 Rfd8 21 Qxd8+!? Rxd8 22 Rxd8+ Kh7 23 e5 Qe7? 24 Rd6 c5? 25 Rxf6 Bxf6 26 Nd5 Qe6 27 Nxf6+ Kg7 28 Rdl Qc8 29 Rd7 a6 30 Re7

(1-0)

Steven Cross (2196) - Perry Youngworth K-Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 Bg5 c5 7 d5 b5!? 8 cb a6 9 Qd2 Qa5 10 b6!? Bg4 11 Be2 Nbd7 12 0-0 Qxb6 13 Rael Rfb8 14 b3 Qc7 15 h3 Bxf3 16 gf!? Rb4 17 Kg2 a5 18 h4 Nb6 19 a3 Rxb3 20 Bdl Rxc3

(Diagram)

Position after 20..Rxc3

For the exchange, Black gets a couple of pawns, plus a persistent initiative.

21 Qxc3 Nxe4 22 Qe3 Nxg5 23 Qxg5 Bf6 24 Qd2 Qb7! 25 Bb3 c4 26 Ba2 Qxd5 27 Qxd5 Nxd5 28 Bxc4 Nf4+ 29 Kg3 Be5 30 Rbl d5 31 Ba2 e6 32 Rb7 Bd6 33 Rd7 Ne2+ 34 Kg4 h5+ 35 Kh3 Bxa3

36 Rb1 Bb4 37 Rb3 Rc8 38 Re3 Nd4 39 Rd3 Nf5 40 Bb3 Rc1 41 f4 Rh1+ 42 Kg2 Rxh4 (0-1)

Subu Subramaniam (2191) - Jeff Kastner (2344) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Ndb5 d6 7 B f4 e5 8 Bg5 a6 9 Na3 Be6

The Sveshnikov Sicilian is all the rage these days; a few words about the subtleties employed by Black in this particular game would not be inappropriate. First, the sequence 2..e6 and 5..Nc6, instead of the older 2..Nc6 and 5..e5, forestalls the dangerous sidelines 6 Ndb5 d6 7 a4 and 7 Nd5; it also spends an extra move to reach the same position (8..a6, instead of 7..a6 in the old line), thereby putting us one move closer to the time-control. Second, 9..Be6 is a line that is being revived (it was originally attributed to the 18th-century Englishman H E Bird), now that the main line 9..b5 is getting heavily analyzed.

10 Nc4 Rc8 11 Bxf6 gf 12 Ne3 Bh6 13 Ned5 Rg8 14 Qh5 Rg6 15 B d3 Nd4 16 h3 Kd7

Believe it or not, all these horribly artificial-looking moves are "theory" - that is, they've been played before. Peters - Day, Lone Pine 1977, continued 17 0-0 here. Subramaniam prefers not to "castle into it", but gets his king in trouble all the same!

17 f4 Bxf4 18 Nxf4 ef 19 0-0-0 Rg5 20 Qh6 Rxg2 21 Qxf4? Rxc3!

It's all over now: on 22 bc, of course 22..Rxc2+ and ..Ne2+.

22 Bb5+ ab 23 Rxd4 Rcxc2+ 24 Kd1 Qb6 (0-1)

Richard Lobo (2416) - Tom Weissbein (2241) K-Indian

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 g6 3 e4 d6 4 d4 Bg7 5 f3 c6 6 Be3 a6 7 Bd3 b5 8 Nge2 Nbd7 9 Qd2 Bb7 10 0-0 0-0 11 Rad1 e5 12 b3 Rfe8 13 d5 cd 14 Nxd5 Nxd5 15 cd Nc5 16 Bb1 Rc8 17 Rc1 Bf8 18 Ng3 Rc7 19 Rc2 Qd7 20 Rfc1 Rec8 21 Qa5 f5 22 Nf1 f4 23 Bf2 g5 24 h3 Qd8 25 b4! Nd3 26 Bb6 Rxc2 27 Rxc2! Qd7 28 Rxc8 Qxc8 29 Bxd3 Qc3 30 Be2 Qe1 31 Bxb5 ab 32 Qxb5 (1-0)

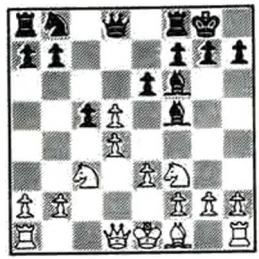
Elliot Winslow (2321) - Paul Carrasco (2054) QG-Slav

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 dc 5 a4 Bf5 6 e3 e6 7 Bxc4 Bb4 8 0-0 0-0 9 Nh4 Bg6 10 Nxg6 hg 11 Qb3 Qe7 12 e4 Ba5 13 e5 Nd5 14 Ne4 Na6 15 Qh3 f6 16 Ra3 Nac7 17 Rg3 g5 18 ef Nxf6 19 Bxg5 Rad8 20 Nxf6+ Rxf6 21 Bxf6 Qxf6 22 Bd3 Rxd4 23 Qh7+ Kf7 24 Qh5+ (1-0)

And lastly, the following entertaining bit of mayhem:

Steve Levine (2079) - Borel Menas (2245) Queen's Pawn

1 d4 d5 2 c4 Bf5!? 3 Nc3 e6 4 Nf3 Nf6 5 Bg5 Be7 6 e3 0-0 7 Bxf6 Bxf6 8 cd c5! ? (Diagram)



Position after 8..c5!?

Surprise, surprise!

9 de Nc6 10 ef+ Kh8 11 Bc4 cd 12 ed Bg4 13 Be2 Rxf7 14 Ne5 Nxe5 15 de Rd7 16 Qc2 Bxe2 17 Qxe2 Bxe5 18 R dl Rxdl+ 19 Qxdl Qc7 20 Qf3 Re8 21 Kdl Rd8+ 22 Kc2 b5 23 Rdl Rc8 24 Qg4 Bxc3 25 Rd7 Qc6 26 bc Qxc3+ 27 Kdl Qc2+ 28 Kel Re8+ 29 Kfl Q bl+ 30 Qdl Qxa2 31 g3 Qc4+ 32 Kgl a5 33 Qal Rg8 34 h4 a4 35 h5 Qg4 36 Rd5 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Maybe it wasn't analytically sound - but wasn't that a party!?

Round Nine

After eight rounds, top score was only a half-point shy of perfection: Christiansen and Grefe each had $7\frac{1}{2}$ points. Neither of them made any particular effort in their mutual encounter; the upshot was a draw in under thirty moves, with both players still in the lead.

IM John Grefe - GM Larry Christiansen Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d3 d5 3 Nd2 e5 4 Ngf3 Bd6 5 d4 ed 6 ed cd 7 Nxd4 Nc6 8 N2f3 Nge7 9 Be2 0-0 10 0-0 a6 11 Be3 Qc7 12 h3 Bd7 13 Rc1 Rac8 14 Nxc6 Bxc6 15 Nd4 Bd7 16 Bd3 Rfe8 17 Qh5 g6 18 Qh4 Be5 19 Rfe1 Nc6 20 c3 Bg7 21 Nf3 Ne5 22 Nxe5 Qxe5 23 Re2 Bf6 24 Qb4 Bc6 25 Rce1 Qc7 26 Bb6 Qd7 27 Qf4 Bg7 28 Bd4 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

That left it up to any of the five players following them with 7 points to catch up by winning; Lord knows, all of them tried.

Florin Gheorghiu ground down Silman in a typical (for Gheorghiu) sort of endgame - I recall him winning just such a minusculately advantageous ending against John Meyer in Atlanta last year (with his beautiful wife along, in both Opens, to cheer him on).

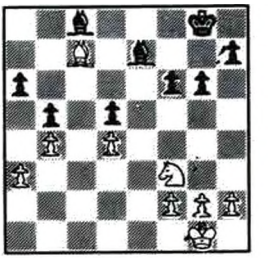
Mrs & Mr Grandmaster

Jeremy Silman - GM Florin Gheorghiu

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 a3 c5 5 e3

With his last move, White has sidestepped a very sharp gambit, which runs as follows: 5 d5 Ba6 6 Qc2 ed 7 cd Bb7 8 e4 Qe7 9 Bd3 Nxd5 10 0-0 - White and Black have each won their share of recent games, which only shows that you'd better have something ready before venturing this line against a strong player!

5 ... Bb7 6 Nc3 cd 7 ed d5 8 cd Nxd5 9 Bb5+ Bc6 10 Bd3 Nd7 11 0-0 Be7 12 Bd2 0-0 13 Rc1 Nxc3 14 Rxc3 Bb7 15 Bf4 Nf6 16 Be5 Rc8 17 Rxc8 Qxc8 18 Qb1 g6 19 Qc1 Qxc1 20 Rxc1 Nd5 21 Be4 f6 22 Bg3 Rc8 23 Rxc8+ Bxc8 24 Bb8 a6 25 Bxd5 ed 26 Bc7 b5 27 b4 (Diagram)



Position after ?27 b4

It may not look like much - the pair of bishops with pawns on both sides of the board - but in the hands of a top-class grandmaster, it's enough to win with.

27 ... Bf5 28 Ne1 Kf7 29 Kf1 h5 30 Ke2 Ke6 31 Bf4 g5 32 Bc1 Bd6 33 h3 g4 34 h4? g3! 35 f3 Bb1 36 Nd3 Kf5 37 Nc5 Ba2 38 Nxa6 Bc4+ 39 Ke1 Bf4! 40 Bxf4 Kxf4 41 Nc5 Ke3 42 a4 ba 43 Nxa4 Kxd4 44 Nc5 Kc3 (0-1)

The 3rd-Board game was another case of deja vu: deFirmian tried manfully to win with a sacrifice I believe we've seen before in Chess Life: was it Nogueiras - Tarjan in a 1980 issue? Anyway, White gave up a full rook for an attack; when the dust had settled, however, he had rook and a pair of pawns for two minor pieces, in an approximately level endgame.

IM Nick deFirmian - John Meyer Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Bc4 a6 7 Bb3 Be7 8 f4 b5 9 0-0 0-0 10 e5 de 11 fe Nfd7 12 Be3 Qc7 13 Rxf7!? Rxf7 14 Nxe6 Qxe5 15 Bd4 Qf5 16 Nxg7 Qf4 17 Ne6 Qf5 18 Ng7 Qf4 19 Ne2 Qg5 20 Ne6 Qh4 21 Nc7 Bb7 22 Nxa8 Bxa8 23 Qf1 Nf6 24 Qf5 Qe4 25 Qxe4 Bxe4 26 Nc3 Bg6 27 Nd5 Nxd5 28 Bx d5 Kf8 29 Bxf7 Kxf7 30 c3 Nc6 31 Bf2 Ne5 32 Bd4 Nc6 33 Bf2 Ne5 34 b3 Kf6 35 Bd4 Ke6 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

And Russ Wada, the last 7-pointer with a chance to tie for the lead, lost it when he was run over by GM James Tarjan - but that game has a little preface. You see, Tarjan had spent the entire previous evening wearing down old campaigner Louis Levy's resistance in the following marathon endgame (which somehow managed to escape inclusion in my Round Eight coverage). Some quirk in the pairing scheme then gave him another White in Round Nine - but first, the game from Round 8 :

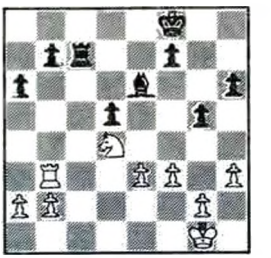
GM James Tarjan (2623) - Louis Levy (2264) (Round Eight)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 cd ed 5 Bg5 Be7 6 e3 0-0 7 Qc2 h6 8 Bh4 Re8 9 Nf3 Be6 10 Bd3 c5!? 11 dc Nbd7

Levy, a transplanted Californian who hails from New York, was known back East for his enterprising style in the opening, favoring such defenses as the Center Counter, for example.

12 0-0 Nxc5 13 Bb5 Rf8 14 Rfd1 Rc8 15 Qe2 Qb6 16 Na4! Nxa4 17 Bxa4 Bg4 18 Bb3 g5 19 Bg3 Rfd8 20 h3 Be6 21 Be5 Ne4 22 R acl Rxcl 23 Rxcl Bd6 24 Bxd6 Rxd6 25 Nd4 Rd8 26 Qb5 Qxb5 27 Nxb5 a6 28 Nd4 Rd7 29 f3 Nd2 30 Rc3 Kf8 31 Rd3 Nxb3 32 Rxb3 Rc7 (Diagram)

A classic confrontation: the "good" knight (blockading an isolated pawn) vs. the "bad" bishop. White gradually improves his position, then works for a favorable exchange.



Position after 32..Rc7

33 Rb6 Re7 34 Kf2 Kg7 35 Rd6 Kh7 36 Ke2 Rd7 37 Rb6 Rc7 38 Kd2 Bc8 39 Rd6 Rd7 40 Nf5! h5

Black can't take, unfortunately, as the resulting endgame is hopeless. As played, he does get a surprising amount of play.

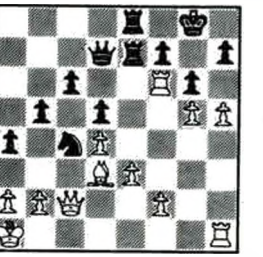
41 Rh6+ Kg8 42 Rxh5 f6 43 Rh6 Rf7 44 Rg6+ Kh7 45 Rh6+ Kg8 46 g4 Bxf5 47 gf Kg7 48 Rg6+ Kf8 49 Kd3 Ke7 50 Kd4 Rh7 51 Kxd5 Kf7 52 f4 gf 53 ef Rxh3 54 Rg2 Rh5 55 Ke4 b5 56 Rc2 Ke7 57 Rc7+ Kd8 58 Rc6 Rh2 59 Rxa6 Rxb2 60 Kd5 Re2 61 K c5 Re4 62 Kd5 Re2 63 a3 Re3 64 Kc5 Re4 65 Kxb5 Rxf4 66 Rx f6 Ke7 67 Re6+ Kd7 68 Re5 Kd6 69 Rc5 Rf1 70 Rc6+ Ke5 71 f6 Kd5 72 Rb6 Rb1+ 73 Ka5 Rf1 74 a4 (1-0)

So - when Tarjan, as White, found himself facing yet another Queen's Gambit Declined in Round Nine, you may well imagine he felt at least a stirring of impatience - no three am games tonight!

So he went after the point a bit more aggressively, and the result was the following pleasant little attacking game.

GM James Tarjan - Russ Wada Queen's Gambit Decl.

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 cd ed 5 Bg5 Be7 6 e3 0-0 7 Bd3 c6 8 Qc2 Nbd7 9 Nf3 Re8 10 h3 Nf8 11 Bf4 Ng6 12 Bh2 Bd6 13 Bxd6 Qxd6 14 0-0-0 b5 15 g4 Nd7 16 g5 Nb6 17 Kb1 Bd7 18 Rc1 a5 19 h4 Bg4 20 Nd2 Bh5 21 Ne2 Bxe2 22 Bxe2 Nc4 23 Nb3 Nf8 24 Bd3 g6 25 h5 Re7 26 Nc5 Nd7 27 Nxd7 Rxd7 28 Rh4 Re7 29 Rlh1 Rae8 30 Ka1 a4 31 Qb1 Qe6 32 Rf4 Qd7 33 Rf6 Nd2 34 Qc2 Nc4 (Diagram)



35 hg fg 36 Bxg6! hg 37 Qxg6+ Rg7 38 Qh5 Rh7 39 Rg6+ Kh8 40 Rh6, and Black resigned (1-0), for after 40 .. Re7 41 g6! Rxh6 42 Qxh6+ is lethal.

I snapped these two shots in the analysis/book room. I'll not swear to the accuracy of the quotes :

Tarjan (left) : I know I hadda win in there, I know I did ...

Jay Whitehead (right) : C'mon, Jim, give it up; let's go find some girls.

GM Tarjan (l), US Junior Champion Whitehead (r), looking for loopholes

GM Christiansen (left) : You had him so-o-o-o busted!

Jeremy Silman (right) : Concentrate on defense, boys ... Become the bishop!

Same position, different viewpoint: GM Christiansen (l) and Silman (r) - and a kibitzer, who sees it all

IM Kudrin trotted out a super-slow line that has been getting a lot of results in the Soviet Union lately, thanks mainly to its chief proponent, a young master on the rise named Dolmatov. No doubt, the variation will soon have his name - let's be the first!

IM Sergey Kudrin - Richard Lobo Giuoco - Dolmatov Var.

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d3(!) d6 6 0-0 Bb6 7 Bb3 Be6 8 Nbd2 Bxb3 9 Qxb3 Nd7 10 Rel 0-0 11 Qd1 a6 12 Nf1 Ne7 13 Ng3 h6 14 Nh4 Nc5 15 d4 Ne6
16 Ngf5 (Diagram)

What more could you ask from an Open Game - control of the center, a good kingside attack, and no counterplay at all for Black.

Position after 16 Ngf5

16 ... ed 17 cd Nxf5 18 Nxf5 Qf6 19 Be3 Rfe8 20 Qd3 Rad8 21 Rad1 h5 22 Ng3 g6 23 Ne2 d5 24 e5 Qe7 25 Qb3 Ng7 26 Nc3 Qe6 27 Bg5 Rd7 28 Bf6 Nf5 29 Ne2 Ba5 30 Rf1

Bb6 31 Nf4 Qc6 32 Qh3 Ng7 33 g4 (1-0)

I shouldn't get into the theoretical side of these games: as my notes to the Rowley - Kudrin game (Rd. 8) showed, at this level, I'm out of my depth. Still, I can't resist pointing out that in the opening of the next game, the latest Russky analysis to which I have access says that Black's 11 .. Nxd5 is no good, because of the line White plays, a suggestion of Razuvayev's, which goes 14 Rel! Qb8 15 Nbd2 Qb6 16 Qe2 Rae8 17 Qf1. If that's so, then Biyiasas' 14 .. Qe7! is a strengthening of this line for Black, making it a valid alternative to 11 .. ed.

Paul Whitehead - GM Peter Biyiasas Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Rel b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 d4 Bg4 10 Be3 d5! 11 ed Nxd5 12 de Nxe3 13 Rxe3 Bc5 14 Rel! Qe7! 15 Nbd2 Rad8 16 Qc2 Bh5 17 Qe4 Na5 18 Bd1 Bg6 19 Qf4 Bb6 20 b4 Nc6 21 a4 Rd3 22 Rc1 Nd8 23 ab Ne6 24 Qg3 R8d8 25 Nc4 ab 26 Nxb6 cb 27 Be2 R3d5 28 Nh4 Qc7 29 f4 Bd3 30 Bf3 R5d7 31 f5 Nf8 32 f6 Bg6 33 Nx g6 hg 34 Qh4 Ne6 35 fg Nxg7 36 Bg4 Qc4 37 Qh3 Re7 38 Be2 Qf4 39 Bxb5 Rxe5 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

It used to be said of Soltis' opponents: Woe to him upon whom Andy unleashes his pet Dragon (as Black)! Well, these days it seems the same thing is starting to happen to those who have the misfortune to face his pet Vienna (as White). First he beat Lobo with it in Round 7; now Rowley tries something completely different - and loses even quicker.

GM Andrew Soltis - Robert Rowley Vienna

1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 Bb4!? 4 Bg2 0-0 5 a3 Ba5 6 Nge2 c6 7 d3 d5 8 b4 Bb6 9 ed cd 10 0-0 h6 11 Na4 Bc7 12 c4 Nc6 13 cd Nxd5 14 Bb2 N5e7 15 Rc1 (Diagram)

Position after 15 Rc1

There - what did I tell you? This "inoffensive" opening has left White with a space advantage, two raking bishops, and pressure against both Black's center and queenside.

15 ... Rb8 16 Qd2 Be6 17 b5 Nd4

18 Nxd4 ed 19 Qb4 Be5 20 Rfe1 Bf6 21 Nc5 Nd5 22 Qb3! Nf4 23 Nxe6 Nxe6 24 a4 Be7 25 Re5 Rc8 26 Rc4 Rxc4 27 Qxc4 Bf6 28 Re2 Qd7 29 Qd5! Qxd5 30 Bxd5 Nc5 31 Ba3 b6 32 Bx c5 bc 33 a5 (1-0)

Black's resignation was hardly premature, in view of 33..R b8 34 b6 ab 35 a6!

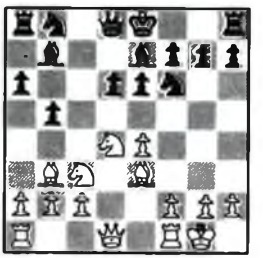
Even some of the draws proved interesting this round.

Jeff Kastner - Doug Root QG Tarrasch

1 Nf3 d5 2 g3 Nf6 3 Bg2 e6 4 0-0 Be7 5 c4 0-0 6 b3 a5 7 a3 c5 8 cd ed 9 d4 Ne4 10 Bb2 Nc6 11 dc Bxc5 12 Nc3 Nxc3 13 Bxc3 d4 14 Bb2 Bf5 15 b4 ab 16 ab Qb6 17 Nh4 Bg4 18 h3 Qxb4 19 hg Qxb2 20 Rb1 Qa2 21 Rxb7 Ne5 22 Nf5 Rac8 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Dmitri Gurevich - Elliott Winslow Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 b5 8 0-0 Be7 9 Be3 Bb7 (Diagram)



Position after 9..Bb7

It's common knowledge that Black is supposed to castle before playing this, so as not to provoke the following sacrifice. If Elliott provoked it, then I bet he did it on purpose. Elliott is not the sort of guy to be caught offguard in the opening - in fact, he's rather the sort who marks up his ECOs with little notes of his own. It almost works here: the sacrifice seems to be good for no more than a draw.

10 Bxe6!? fe 11 Nxe6 Qc8 12 Nxg7+ Kf7 13 Nf5 Qe6 14 Bd4 Nbd7 15 Re1 Bf8 16 Qf3 Rg8 17 Rad1 Re8 18 Re3 Rg5 19 h4 Rg4 20 Bx f6 Nxf6 21 Nd5 Bxd5 22 ed Qc8 23 Rde1 Rxe3 24 fe Qxc2 25 R f1 Qe4 26 Nh6+ Bxh6 27 Qxf6+ Ke8 28 Qh8+ Ke7 29 Qf6+ Ke8 30 Qh8+ ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Even after two straight losses, Shirazi still plays interesting chess - as his game from this round (played at the "depth" of Board 13) shows. Of course, his opponent helped too - Art Wang has long been known as a guy who'd rather combine than

eat.

IM Kamran Shirazi (2525) - Arthur Wang (2135) Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 Bf5 4 Bd3 Bxd3 5 Qxd3 e6 6 Ne2 c5 7 c3 Nc6 8 f4 Rc8 9 0-0 g6 10 Be3 c4 11 Qc2 h5 12 Nd2 Nh6 13 Rf3 b5 14 Rafl Nf5 15 Ng3 N e7 16 Bf2 Qa5 17 b4 Qd8 18 a4 a6 19 R al Nh4 20 Re3 Bh6 21 Nxh5! Nef5 22 Nf6+ Kf8 23 Rh3 Bxf4 24 g4 Kg7 25 ab ab 26 Rfl Nf3+ 27 Rxf3 Bxh2+ 28 Kg2 Nh4+ 29 Bxh4 Rxh4 30 Rhl Qh8 31 Nfl Bxe5!? 32 Nh5+! Rxh5 33 gh (1-0)

Cliff Hart (2138) - Loal Davis (2265) QG Tarrasch

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 c5 4 cd ed 5 Nf3 Nc6 6 g3 Nf6 7 Bg2 B e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Be3 Ng4 10 Bf4 Bf5 11 dc d4 12 Na4 Re8 13 h3 Nf6 14 Rcl Qd7 15 Kh2 Rad8 16 Nel Be4 17 Bxe4 Nxe4 18 Nd3 g5 19 Bd2 Qd5 20 Bel Rd7 21 b4 h5 22 b5 Nd8 23 Qb3 Qf5 24 B b4 h4 25 g4 Qf6 26 Ba5 Ne6 27 c6 Bd6+ 28 Khl bc 29 bc Rde7 30 Bb4 Nf4 31 Nxf4 Qxf4 32 Bxd6 Qxd6 33 Qd3 (Diagram)

Black's patience is finally rewarded.

33 ... Nxf2+! 34 Rxf2 Re3 35 Qf5 Rxh3+ 36 Kgl Qg3+ 37 Rg2 Qe3 + 38 Rf2 Qxcl+ 39 Rfl Qe3+ 40 Qf2 Rg3+ 41 Kh2 Qxf2+ 42 Rxf2 Rc8 43 Rf6 Ra3 44 Nc5 Rc3 (0-1)

Position after 33 Qd3

And finally, a fast little two-step.

John Wilson (2124) - Rick Shepard, Jr (1970) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Be2 Be7 7 f4 a6 8 Be3 Qc7 9 g4 b5 10 g5 Nfd7 11 Nb3 Bb7 12 Bf3 Nc6 13 Q e2 Nb6 14 a4 b4 15 a5! Nxa5! 16 Nb5! ab 17 Qxb5+ Bc6 18 Bx b6 Qb7 19 e5! d5 20 Nc5 Nb3 21 Rxa8+ Qxa8 22 Qxb4 d4 23 Bx c6+ Qxc6 24 Qa4 Qxa4 25 Nxa4 Bb4+ 26 Ke2 Ba5 27 cb (1-0)

***

Round Ten

Gheorghiu (8)	½	Grefe (8)
Christiansen(8)	1	Tarjan (7½)
Meyer (7½)	1	Kudrin (7½)
Soltis (7½)	1	Burger (7½)
Thinnsen (7½)	0	deFirmian (7½)

Top board today was a wild, seesaw affair that the spectators applauded at its conclusion, despite its inconclusive result. Now back in the tournament saddle, Gheorghiu made a determined effort to stay atop the field, trotting out a decidedly unusual weapon against Grefe's Queen's Indian. When the opening smoke had cleared, White had a significant spatial plus, with chances to exploit it. Black's 22nd move, however, upset the applecart - indeed, Black came out of the complications a pawn up, but gave it back to set up threats against White's king. The best he could do with them, however, was a perpetual check. A fighting game!

GM Florin Gheorghiu - IM John Grefe Queen's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 g3 Ba6 5 Qb3 c5 6 d5 ed 7 cd c4 8 Qc2 Bb4+ 9 Bd2 Qe7 10 Bxb4 Qxb4+ 11 Nfd2 0-0 12 Bg2 d6 13 Nc3 Qc5 14 Nde4 Nxe4 15 Nxe4 Qc7 16 b4 Nd7 17 a4 Bb7 18 Nc3 a6 19 0-0 Rfe8 20 Rfd1 Rac8 21 h3 Qd8 22 Qd2 a5! 23 Nb5 c3 24 Nxc3 ab 25 Ne4 Nc5 26 Qxb4 Ba6 27 Nc3 Bxe2 28 Nxe2 Rxe2 29 Qg4 Rc2 30 Rab1 Ra8 31 Rb4 Ra2 32 Qc4 R2xa4 33 Rdb1 Rxb4 34 Rxb4 34 Qxb4 Rb8 35 Qb5 g6 36 Qc6 h5 37 h4 Nd3 38 f4 Qe7 39 Kh2 Qe2 40 Qxd6 Ra8 41 Qxb6 Ra2 42 Qg1 Nf2 43 Re1 Ng4+ 44 Kh3 Nf2+ (½-½)

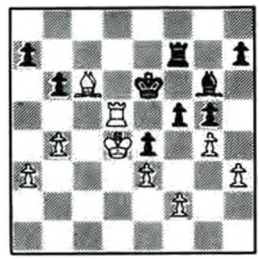
Tarjan was vanquished in pretty much the same sort of long, slow, painfully lost endgame in which he had defeated Louis Levy two days before - except that Christiansen found a cute little tactical twist that enabled him to finish matters, and regain the Open's sole leadership, before the adjournment.

GM Larry Christiansen - GM James Tarjan Q-Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 Nc3 Bb7 5 a3 d5 6 cd ed

Played to avoid all the current analysis on the main line 6..Nd5.

7 Bf4 Be7 8 e3 0-0 9 Be2 c5 10 0-0 Nbd7 11 Ne5 Nxe5 12 Bxe5 Ne4 13 dc Bxc5 14 Rc1 Re8 15 Bd4 Rc8 16 Nxe4 Bxd4 17 Rxc8 Bxc8 18 Qxd4 de 19 Rd1 Qxd4 20 Rxd4 g5 21 Kf1 Kg7 22 Ke1 Kf6 23 Kd2 Ke5 24 Bb5 Re7 25 Bc6 Bf5 26 g4 Bg6 27 Rd5+ Kf6 28 b4 Re5 29 Rd7 Re7 30 Rd8 Ke6 31 Kc3 f5 32 h3 Ke5 33 Rd5+ Ke6 34 Kd4 Rf7 (Diagram)



Position after 34 .. Rf7

35 Rxf5! Rxf5 36 gf+ Bxf5
37 Bxe4 Bxh3 38 Bxh7

With a good pawn up, the rest is just technique.

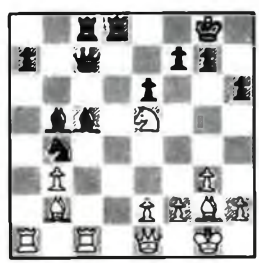
38 ... Bf1 39 Bg8+ Kd6
40 e4 Bg2 41 Bd5 Bh3
42 Bf7 Bg2 43 Bh5 Bh3
44 f3 Be6 45 e5+ Ke7
46 Ke4 Bd7 47 Bg4 (1-0)

The g-pawn falls, too.

Everyone knows that doing well against IMs is a crime in the US Open, punishable by horrendous pairings the next day. John Meyer did well to draw IM deFirmian with Black in Round Nine; his punishment was IM Kudrin. And he won! A little pin did it all ...

John Meyer - IM Sergey Kudrin Queen's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 b6 4 g3 Ba6 5 b3 Bb4+ 6 Bd2 Be7 7 Bg2 c6 8 0-0 d5 9 Bc3 Nbd7 10 Nbd2 Rc8 11 Re1 c5 12 cd Nxd5 13 Bb2 0-0 14 Rc1 b5?! 15 a3 b4 16 ab Nxb4 17 Nc4 Qc7 18 dc Bxc5 19 Qd2 h6 20 Ra1 Rfd8 21 Rec1 Nf6 22 Qe1 Ng4 23 Nce5 Nxe5 24 Nxe5 Bb5 (Diagram)



Position after 24 .. Bb5

After building up a promising position out of the opening, it seems Black has frittered it away. Now comes his punishment!

25 Nc6! Bxc6 26 Rxc5 Nd5
27 Rac1 Qb7 28 Bxd5 Rxd5
29 Qc3 f5 30 Rxc6 (1-0)

Actually, Black's flag fell - not that it mattered!

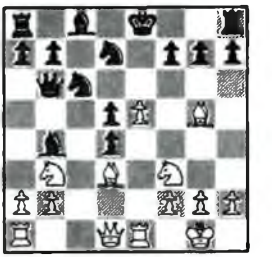
And something terrible happened to Karl Burger ...

GM Andrew Soltis - Karl Burger Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d3 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 Ngf3 Qc7 5 e5 Nfd7 6 d4 e6

So what we have now is a sort of French, Tarrasch Variation, with Black's queen not too well placed on c7 and a tempo spent on a not-very-useful pawn move (..c7-c6).

7 c4 Be7 8 Bd3 c5 9 0-0 cd 10 cd ed 11 Nb3 Nc6 12 Rel Qb6?! 13 Bg5 Bb4?! (Diagram)



Position after 13 .. Bb4

As Hans Kmoch used to put it: "Bad and wrong, that can't last long". Once again, retribution is swift.

14 e6!

That's it, for all practical purposes: Black's king will never get out alive.

14 ... Nf8 15 ef+ Kxf7 16 Bd2 h6 17 Nbxd4! Bxd2 18 Qxd2 Nxd4 19 Nxd4 Ne6 20 Nf3 g5 21 g3 Rf8 22 Bf5 Nc7 23 Bxc8 Raxc8 24 Qd3 Rh8 25 Qf5+ Qf6 26 Qd7+ (1-0)

James Thinnsen - IM Nick deFirmian English (transp.)

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 c5 4 Nc3 cd 5 Nxd4 Nc6 6 g3 Qb6 7 Nb3 Bb4 8 Bg2 Qa6 9 c5 b6 10 cb ab 11 0-0 Bxc3 12 bc d5 13 Bg5 Bb7 14 Bxf6 gf 15 Nd4 Ne5 16 Qd2 Ke7 17 Rfb1 Rhc8 18 Qe3 Rc5 19 Nb3 Rc7 20 Nd4 Qa5

And now White, obviously upset that Black could apparently flout so many of the basic principles of opening play and get away with it, launches an unsound attack. Strange chess!

21 Rxb6?! Nc4 22 Rxe6+ fe 23 Qxe6+ Kf8 24 Rb1 Ra6 25 Rxb7 Rxe6 26 Nxe6+ Kf7 27 Nxc7 Nd6 28 Bxd5+ Ke7 29 Rb3 Qxc7 30 c4 Qa5 31 Re3+ Kd7 32 Kg2 Qxa2 (0-1)

Shapiro wasn't quite as expansive about tonight's game as he

had been, say, after beating Burger (see Rd. 6). When I asked him how it had gone, he said, "Oh, I spent six hours looking stupid." Not quite that bad, perhaps; but then, GMs do have a way ...

GM Peter Biyiasas - Danny Shapiro Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 e6 4 0-0 Nge7 5 b3 d5!? 6 ed Nxd5 7 Bb2 f6

An ugly move, surely - but how else does Black develop his kingside?

8 d4 Be7 9 c4 Nc7 10 Bxc6+ bc 11 Ba3 cd 12 Bxe7 Kxe7 13 Nx d4 Qd6 14 Qg4 g6 15 Qe4 Bd7 16 Nc3 c5 17 Nde2 Qc6 18 Qe3 Rad8 19 Radl Ne8 20 Rd5 Nd6 21 Ng3 Nb7 22 Rfdl Kf7 23 R5 d2 f5 24 Nb5 a6 25 Nd6+ Nxd6 26 Rxd6 Qc7 27 Qd2 Ke7 28 b4 cb 29 Qxb4 Kf7 30 Qd2 Ke7 31 Qd4 Rhg8 32 Qh4+ Kf7 33 Qx h7+ Rg7 34 Qh4 R7g8 35 c5 (1-0)

36 c6 will be crushing.

D Russ Wada - Jeremy Silman Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 de 4 Nxe4 Nd7

Silman has made a bit of a specialty of 4..Nf6 5 Nxf6+ gf lately - indeed, he recently documented that fact in Chess Life. So perhaps he was avoiding a prepared line with the solider text.

5 Nf3 Ngf6 6 Nxf6+ Nxf6 7 Be2

A bit passive. Karpov has had some success recently with 7 Ne5.

7 ... Bf5 8 0-0 e6 9 Bg5 Be7 10 c3 Qb6 11 Qb3 Qxb3 12 ab 0-0 13 b4 a6 14 Bf4 Nd5 15 Bg3 h6 16 Rfel Rad8 17 Bc4 Rfe8 18 Ne5 g5!? 19 Radl h5 20 Nd3?

White has miscalculated - hindsight, of course, says 20 h3 was better.

20 ... h4 21 Bxd5 ed 22 Bc7 Rc8 23 Bb6 Bxd3 24 Rxd3 Bc5! (0-1)

Loal Davis - Dmitri Gurevich Benko Declined

This one has a cute finish. White resigned because if 41 Kgl (the only move that doesn't lose the queen), 41 .. Qd4+ wins the knight (42 Qf2 Nxh3+).

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 f3 bc 5 e4 d6 6 Nc3 g6 7 Bxc4 Bg7 8 f4 0-0 9 Nf3 B a6 10 Bxa6 Nxa6 11 Qe2 Qa5 12 0-0 Nc7 13 Rdl Rfd8 14 Bd2 Qa6 15 Qel Rab8 16 Rabl Nb5 17 Nxb5 Rxb5 18 Bc3 Rb7 19 a3 Qa4 20 Nd2 Rdb8 21 Ral Ng4 22 b3 Bd4+ 23 Khl Q a6 24 Bxd4 cd 25 b4 Rc8 26 Nf3 Ne3 27 Rdcl Rbc7 28 Nxd4 Rxcl 29 Rxcl Rxcl 30 Qxcl Qd3 31 Nc6 Qxe4 32 Qgl Qxf4! 33 h3 h5 34 Nxa7 Nfl! 35 g3 Nxg3+ 36 Kg2 Ne2 37 Qel Qe3 38 Qf2 Nf4+ 39 Kfl Qcl+ 40 Qel Qc4+! (0-1)

And finally, this smooth performance from a young CM destined for greatness (but I anticipate ...) .

Richard Dost (2163) - Kevin Burnett (2322) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 d3 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 Nc6 5 Nf3 Nf6 6 c3 b6 7 0-0 Bb7 (Diagram)

Black has chosen a rather passive way of meeting White's quiet opening. He now gets cause to regret his choice, as White begins greedily seizing space.

Position after 7.. Bb7

8 e5! Nd5 9 Ng5! Nc7 10 f4 0-0 11 d4 f6 12 Nf3 d5 13 ef ef 14 f5! g5 15 Be3 Re8 16 Bf2 c4 17 Nbd2 b5 18 Rel Qd7 19 g4 b4 20 Nfl a5 21 Qd2 Bf8 22 Ng3 Kf7 23 Nh5 Rxel+ 24 Rxel h6 25 Bg3 Bd6 26 Ne5+! Nxe5 27 de fe 28 Bxe5 Bxe5 29 Rxe5 Qd6 30 Qe3 bc 31 bc Re8 32 Rxe8 Nxe8 33 Qa7 Qc7 34 Qd4 Qd6 35 Qh8 Qb6+ 36 Kfl Ke7 37 f6+ Kf7 38 Qh7+ Kf8 (1-0)

Seeing the ghastly consequences of 39 Qe7+, 40 f7+, etc.

Round Eleven

Hooray! I finally got a game of mine published in Max Burkett's bulletin! I didn't collect my $2 book-credit prize, but I did head the bulletin games for that day - so I'll lead off this round with it, too.

Marfia - Don Gordon (1728) King's Indian

Yes, I know he was just a B-player - yes, I know it was unsound (what happens after 28..Rf8 29 Qxh5+ Qf7?) - but it was fun, wasn't it?

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 g6 3 e4 d6 4 d4 Bg7 5 f3 0-0 6 Be3 e5 7 d5 c6 8 Qd2 Qe7 9 0-0-0 Ne8 10 g4 f5 11 gf gf 12 ef Bxf5 13 Nge2 Nd7 14 Ng3 Bg6 15 Be2 Ndf6 16 Bg5 Qd7 17 h4 h5 18 Bd3 Bxd3 19 Qxd3 c5 20 Nf5!? e4! 21 fe Ng4 22 Ne7+ Kf7 23 e5 Nxe5 24 Rhf1+ Nf6 25 Rxf6+ Bxf6 26 Qh7+ Ke8! 27 Bxf6 Rxf6 28 Ng8 Rf5? 29 Qh8 Rd8 30 Nf6++ Kf7 31 Qh7+! Kxf6 32 Ne4 #!

And now, back to serious business ...

Gheorghiu	(8½)	½	Christiansen	(9)
Meyer	(8½)	1	Soltis	(8½)
deFirmian	(8½)	1	Grefe	(8½)

GM Florin Gheorghiu - GM Larry Christiansen English

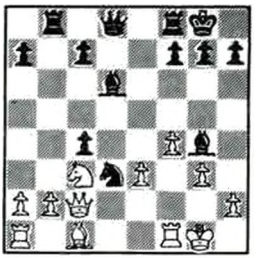
A curious battle of wits occurred in the opening of this game, with Christiansen, apparently, trying to reach something like the game Timman - Karpov, Montreal 1979 (won brilliantly by Black); while Gheorghiu, erudite openings expert that he is, tried valiantly to prevent it. The upshot was that, although the Timman-Karpov position was avoided, White nevertheless got considerably the worse of the opening (see diagram after the 17th move). With his customary resourcefulness, however, Florin managed to keep his losses to one pawn, and that in a rook-and-pawns endgame that he soon demonstrated to be unwinnable for Black.

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 e5 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 d4 ed 5 Nxd4 Bc5 6 Nxc6 bc 7 e3 0-0 8 Be2 d5 9 0-0 Bd6 10 g3 dc!

The Karpov plan: Black voluntarily wrecks his own pawns, in

return for open lines and chances against White's king.

11 Qd4 c5 12 Qxc4 Rb8 13 Bf3 Ng4 14 Bg2 Ne5 15 Qa4 Bg4 16 f4 Nd3 17 Qc2 c4 (Diagram)



Position after .. c4

With 11 Qd4!, White forestalled any possible kingside attack, but Black's pieces have used the tempi gained by attacking the exposed queen to come to excellent posts. White must display great resourcefulness to hold his game together.

18 Ne4 Qe7 19 b3 Nxc1 20 Qxc1 Be2 21 Rf2 Ba3 22 Qd2 Bd3 23 Nc3 Rfe8 24 bc Bxc4 25 Bf1! Qxe3 26 Qxe3 Rxe3 27 Rc2! Bc5 28 Kg2 Rxc3 29 Rxc3 Bd5+ 30 Kh3 Bd4 31 Rac1 Bxc3 32 Rxc3 c6 33 Bc4! Rd8 34 Bxd5 cd 35 Kg2 g6 36 Kf3 Rd7 37 Rc6 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)

Despite Black's contortions, the game is a draw: White's king can deal with the pawn before Black's king gets in among White's kingside pawns.

On Board 2, John Meyer pulled off his most stunning upset so far, defeating Soltis - first an IM, now a GM! - with the very same variation with which Soltis had lost to Grefe two days before.

John Meyer - GM Andrew Soltis King's Indian

1 d4 g6 2 Nf3 Bg7 3 e4 d6 4 c4 Nd7 5 Nc3 e5 6 Be2 Ngf6 7 0-0 0-0 8 Be3 c6 9 Qc2 Ng4 10 Bg5 f6 11 Bd2

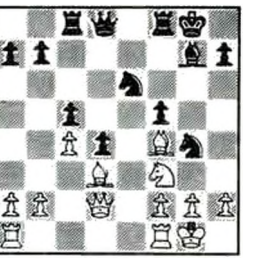
Grefe played 11 Bc1. The text is considered "main line".

11 ... f5 12 ef ed 13 Ne4!

ECO continues 13 Nxd4 Bxd4 14 Bxg4 Ne5!, with a plus for Black, following a game Szabo-Ivkov, Bath 1973. Perhaps on the basis of this game, that verdict should be re-evaluated!

13 ... gf 14 Nxd6 Nc5 15 Bf4 Ne6 16 Qd2 c5 17 Nxc8 Rxc8 18 Bd3! (see diagram, next page)

There it is - the results of the opening are in. And what's the verdict? (1) Black's protected passed QP will be firmly blockaded, and only blocks his bishop (it's a long way to the endgame); (2) Black will have a lot of problems defending his weak KBP and holding the e-file. White's on top.



Position after 18 Bd3

18 ... Qf6 19 h3 Bh6 20 Bxh6 Nxh6 21 Rael Nf7 22 Re2 f4 23 Be4 Neg5

As always, when his position is inferior, Andy sacs a pawn to muddy the waters.

24 Bxb7 Rc7 25 Nxg5 Nxg5 26 Bd5+ Kh8 27 f3 Rg7 28 Kh2 Rg6 29 Rfel Qd6 30 b4! cb 31 Qxd4+ Qf6 32 Qxf6+ Rgxf6

With the queens gone, so is Black's last hope of a successful kingside attack. With time-pressure to add to Black's woes, the end is swift.

33 Re7 Ra6 34 h4 Rh6 35 Rxa7 Rxh4+ 36 Kgl Rb8 37 c5 Rh5 38 Rd7 Rh6 39 c6 Rg6 40 c7 Rc8 41 Rd8+ (1-0)

IM Nick deFirmian - IM John Grefe Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 a6

The same variation that cost deFirmian his 5th-round upset loss to Gogel. This time, if anything, deFirmian will not err on the side of passivity.

6 g3 Nge7 7 Nb3 d6 8 Be3 b5 9 Bg2 Bb7 10 f4 Nc8

Taimanov has championed this treatment lately, rather than his former plan of .. Ne7-g6 - the knight has more to do on the queenside, nor does it get in the way of a later f4-f5.

11 Qe2 Be7 12 0-0-0!? Qc7 13 f5 b4 14 Nbl e5 15 Nld2 a5 16 K bl a4 17 Ncl Ba6 18 Qf2 N8a7 19 Bfl Nb5 20 Nc4 Ncd4

This point marks the end of the quiet-maneuvering phase; beginning now, the pieces start flying all over, as both sides

(but mostly White) sacrifice material freely and repeatedly, in quest of the initiative. (Diagram)

Position after 20..Nd4

21 Bxd4 ed 22 Rxd4! Nxd4 23 Qxd4 0-0 24 Nb6 Bf6

Black sees a long-diagonal mate, and for this the bishop is worth more than the exchange.

25 Nxa8 Rxa8 26 Qd2 a3 27 Bxa6 ab! 28 Nd3 Bc3 29 Qe2 Qc6 30 Nxb4! Bxb4 31 Bc4 Qc7 32 Rd1 Bc3 33 Bd5 Ra5 34 h4 Bf6

Now White clearly holds the initiative, and never lets it go.

35 Qf2 Rc5 36 g4 h6 37 Qh2 Qe7 38 Rh1 Rc3 39 g5 Be5 40 Q d2 Kh7 41 Bxf7 Rg3 42 Bb3 Qa7 43 g6+ Kh8 44 Rd1 Rg1 45 c3 Rxd1+ 46 Bxd1 Qg1 47 Kxb2 Qb6+ 48 Bb3 Qc5 49 h5 Qc6 50 Q d3 Qc5 51 Qc4 Qf2+ 52 Bc2 Qb6+ 53 Qb3 Qc7 54 Bd3 Qa7 55 Q b5 Qa8 56 a4 Qc8 57 Bc4 d5

A gesture of despair - the first of several. Black could also have resigned.

58 ed Bf6 59 a5 Qf8 60 a6 Bxc3+ 61 Kxc3 Qf6+ 62 Kb3 Qe5 63 a7 (1-0)

Which set the stage for the final round: Christiansen, Meyer and deFirmian tied for top money with $9\frac{1}{2}$, with Gheorghiu a half-point back. Who would join these four?

Eight players began Round 11 with 8 points; they were paired, and all four games ended decisively. First to finish was the following wild encounter, in which Dmitri called a (temporary) halt to the career of an up-and-coming CM.

Dmitri Gurevich - Richard Dost French

1 d4 e6 2 e4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 Nc6 5 Nf3 Qb6 6 Be2 Nge7 7 Kf1

This has to be a TN: it looks so crazy, I know it's never been played before.

7 ... Bd7 8 Na3 cd 9 cd Nf5 10 Nc2 h5 11 h4 Rc8 12 g3 Nb4 13 Nxb4 Qxb4

There, see? - the move had a point. If he hadn't made it on move 7, he'd be playing it now. He's a tempo ahead! ...

14 Kg2 Bb5 15 Bg5 Be7 16 Bxe7 Kxe7 17 Bxb5 Qxb5 18 Qd2 Rc7 19 Qg5+ Kd7 20 Rab1 Rc2 21 Rhe1!?

This can't be sound (hence the ?), but it works (hence the !)

21 ... Rxb2 22 a4 Qb4 23 Rxb2 Qxb2 24 Rc1 Qb4 25 Rc5 Nxd4 26 Qc1 Rd8 27 Nxd4 Qxd4 28 Rc7+ Ke8

I'm sure Black was regretting taking that second pawn now, but it's too late to apologize.

29 Qg5 Qe4+ 30 Kh2 Qb4 31 Qxg7 Qf8 32 Qf6 d4 33 Rxb7 d3 34 Qf3 Qg7 35 Qc6+ Kf8 36 Qc7 Re8 37 Rb8 Rxb8 38 Qxb8+ Ke7 39 Qxa7+ Kd8 40 Qd4+ Kc7 41 Qc4+ Kb6 42 Qxd3 Qxe5 43 Qe3+! Qxe3 44 fe f5 45 Kg2 Ka5 46 Kf3 Kxa4 47 Kf4 Kb3 48 Ke5 (1-0)

The second game of this group to finish was Silman-Winslow. There's a sad story to it, which the loser related to me after the close of the tournament.

Jeremy Silman - Elliott Winslow Double Fianchetto

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 b6 3 Bg2 Bb7 4 0-0 g6

A sound alternative to all the Queen's Indians that have been floating around the Open these past two weeks.

5 c4 c5 6 b3 Bg7 7 Bb2 0-0 8 Nc3 Na6! 9 d4 cd

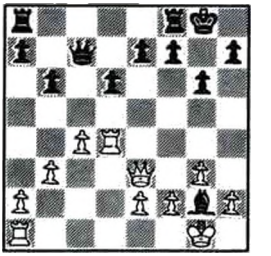
According to the people who wrote the book, 9..d5! is Black's simplest equalizing line.

10 Qxd4 Ne4 11 Qe3 Nxc3 12 Bxc3 Bxc3 13 Qxc3 Nc5 14 Rfd1

White enjoys a slight spatial plus; can he do anything with it?

14 ... Qc7 15 Qe3 Ne6 16 Rd2 d6 17 Nd4 Nxd4 18 Rxd4 Bxg2?

After careless play like this, the answer is emphatically Yes!



Position after 18..Bxg2

19 Rh4! (threatening 20 Qh6 and mate)
19 ... e5 20 Kxg2 Rad8

Now Black has a permanent weakness (the d-pawn) to worry about; his only compensation is the offside White rook.

21 Rdl f5 22 Rd5 Qe7?

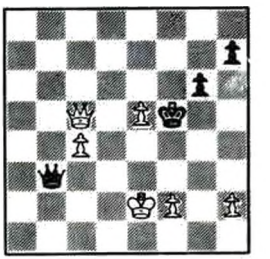
Now White gets the rook back.

23 Rhd4! Rd7 24 Rdl f4 25 Qe4 Rf6 26 a4 Rc7 27 a5 Kg7 28 R b5 Qe8 29 ab ab 30 Ral Rc6 31 Ra7+ Rf7 32 Rxf7+ Kxf7 33 gf ef 34 Qxf4+ Kg8 35 e3 Rc5 36 Rxc5 dc 37 Kf3 Qc6+ 38 e4 Qd7

To understand this last phase of the game, you have to know that both players were by now in fierce time-pressure.

39 Qb8+ Kf7 40 Qxb6 Qh3+ 41 Ke2 Qg4+ 42 Ke3 Qg5+ 43 Kd3 Qe5 44 Qb7+ Kf6 45 Qc6+ Kg7 46 Qd7+ Kf6 47 Qd5 Qb2 48 e5+ Kf5 49 Qxc5 Qxb3+ 50 Ke2 (Diagram)

At this point, as Elliott related to me afterwards, he looked up and stupidly asked, "Is that 50 moves?" - instead of making that 50th move, 50..Qc2+, which gives Black a perpetual check! He got two answers: "One - no, it's not 50 for you yet; and Two - your flag is down." (1-0:time)



Position after 50 Ke2

Next to fall was GM Bisguier, who lost a hairy game to the Midwest's Giant-killer, Dennis Gogel. The game got out of the books very early, which Arthur likes; immense complications soon developed, which Art is also known to favor. Unfortunately, when the decisive attack got underway, it was White in the catbird seat; and although Art managed to escape with a whole king, it was only to land in a bishops-of-opposite color endgame that offered his opponent few technical difficulties in putting away the point.

Dennis Gogel - GM Arthur Bisguier English

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 Bb4 4 Bg2 0-0 5 Qc2 Nc6 6 a3 Bxc3 7 bc?! d6 8 Rb1 Qe8 9 d3 h6 10 e4 Nh7 11 Ne2 b6 12 Be3 f5

Black tries for "a little push" - and gets back an uppercut!

13 d4! Nf6 14 ef e4 15 g4!? Nxg4 16 Bxe4 Ba6 17 Bd5+ Kh8 18 Qd3 Nf6 19 Be6 d5! 20 Nf4! Bxc4 21 Qd1 Kh7 22 Rg1 Nd8 23 Qf3 Nxe6 24 Nxe6

If anything, the knight is more unpleasant on e6 than the bishop.

24 ... Rf7 25 Qh3 Qe7 26 Rg6 Ng8 27 Kd2 Raf8 28 Rbg1 Qx a3 29 Rxg7+ Rxg7 30 Rxg7+ Kh8 31 Rxg8+! Kxg8 32 Qg4+ K f7 33 Qg7+ Ke8 34 Nxc7+ Kd8 35 Ne6+ Ke8 36 Qxf8+ Qxf8 37 Nxf8 Kxf8 38 Bxh6+ Kf7 39 Bg5 a5 40 Kc2 a4 41 Kb2 Bd3 42 Ka3 b5 43 Kb4 Bxf5 44 Kxb5 a3 45 Bc1 a2 46 Bb2 Bd3+ 47 Kc5 Bc4 48 Kd6 Kf6 49 h4 Kf5 50 h5 Kg5 51 Ke6 Kxh5 52 f4 Kg4 53 f5 Bd3 54 f6 Bg6 55 c4 dc 56 d5 Kf4 57 f7 Bx f7+ 58 Kxf7 Ke4 59 d6 Kd3 60 d7 (1-0)

And the very last - almost the last game of the whole Round to finish, in fact - was Kastner-Biyiasas. I stopped Kastner in the corridor to ask him how it went, and he stopped, considered for a moment, and then said, "I learned another essential rook-and-pawn endgame tonight."

Jeff Kastner - GM Peter Biyiasas King's Indian

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 g6 3 b3 Bg7 4 Bb2 0-0 5 Bg2 d6 6 d4 Nbd7 7 0-0 e5 8 de Ng4 9 Nc3 de 10 Nd2 Nh6 11 Nc4 f6 12 a4 Nf7 13 a5 a6 14 Qd5!? f5 15 e4 f4 16 Ba3 Re8 17 Rad1 Qg5 18 Qd3 Nf6 19 Nd5 Nxd5 20 ed Bf5 21 Be4 Rad8 22 d6!? cd 23 Bxf5 gf 24 Nxd6 Nxd6 25 Bxd6 Kh8 26 Qf3 fg 27 hg f4! 28 Kg2 fg 29 fg Qg6! 30 Bb4 Qxc2+ 31 Kh1 Qg6 32 Rxd8 Rxd8 33 Be7 e4 34 Qf5 Qxf5 35 Rxf5 e3! 36 Kg2 e2 37 Bb4 Rd3 38 Kf2 Rxb3 39 Bd2 Bc3 40 Bxc3 Rxc3 41 Rf7 Rxg3! 42 Rxb7 Re3! 43 Ke1 Re5 44 Rb6 Rxa5 45 Kxe2 Kg7 46 Kf3 Rf5+ 47 Kg2 Rf6 48 Rb7+ Kg6 49 R a7 h6 50 Ra8 Kf5 (See diagram, next page)

This was the time-control, but all games were to be played to a finish tonight, so there was no adjournment - and no analysis.

Perhaps, with a night's analysis under his belt, and a leisurely perusal of an endgame text or two, Kastner could've found the drawing line to hold the position shown at right. But he didn't have it, and there went the half-point.

Position after 50..Kf5

Well, I've learned my lesson from this, same as Jeff: I studied this endgame!

51 Kf3 h5 52 Kg3 Kg5 53 Rg8+ Rg6
54 Ra8 Kh6+ 55 Kf4 Rf6+ 56 Kg3 Kg5 57 Rg8+ Rg6 58 Ra8 h4+
59 Kh3 Rh6 60 Rf8 Rf6 61 Rg8+ Kf4 62 Rg4+ Kf3 63 Rxh4 a5
64 Kh2 Ra6 65 Ra4 Kf2 66 Kh3 Ke3 67 Kg2 Kd3 68 Kf2 Kc3
69 Ke2 Kb3 70 Ral a4 71 Rbl+ Kc2 72 Rb8 a3 73 Rc8+ Kb3
74 Rb8+ Ka4 (0-1)

So on the morrow it would be: Christiansen, deFirmian and John Meyer with $9\frac{1}{2}$, followed by Gheorghiu, Biyiasas, Silman, Gurevich and Gogel with 9 points: these eight would fight it out for the US Open title.

In the next group down, a curious thing happened: every one of the 13 boards with $7\frac{1}{2}$ points ended decisively, and the vast majority of them were finished before 40 moves. Some of them, in fact, ended considerably before that.

GM James Tarjan (2623) - Harry Radke (2261) QG Ragozin

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Nf3 d5 5 Bg5 h6 6 Bxf6 Qxf6 7 e3 0-0 8 a3 Bxc3+ 9 bc c5 10 cd ed 11 Bd3 Nc6 12 h3 c4 13 Bc2 B f5 14 Bxf5 Qxf5 15 Qb1! Qd7 16 Qb5 b6 17 0-0 a6 18 Qb1 b5 19 e4 Rab8 20 Re1 a5 21 ed Qxd5 22 Ne5 b4 23 ab ab 24 Nxc6 Qxc6 25 cb Qd6 26 b5 Qxd4 27 Qb4 Qb6 28 Re5 Rfc8 29 Rc1 Qf6 30 R e3 Qf5 31 b6 Qc5? 32 Re8+! (1-0)

After a sterling performance against high-rated opposition, the 1980 US Amateur Champion came sadly a cropper against the - would you believe - US Open Ping-Pong Champion?

Kurt Stein - Richard Lobo Goring Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 ed 4 Bc4 Bc5 5 Ng5?! Nh6 6 Qh5 Qe7 7 f4 d6 8 0-0 Bg4 9 Qh4 d3+ 10 Kh1 Be2 11 Re1 Ng4! 12 Bxf7+

Kf8 13 Rfl (forced) Bxfl 14 Qxg4 h6 15 Bg6 hg 16 Nc3 Be2 17 Nxe2 de 18 Qxe2 Qf6 19 f5 Qe5 20 Bh5 Re8 21 Qdl Qxe4 22 Bd2 Qh4 23 g4, but (0-1), since 23 .. Rxh5 wins anyway.

Shows what happens, when you don't know the line!

IM Sergey Kudrin (2544) - David Mark (2256) Sicilian

l e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 Be3 Bg7 7 f3 Nc6 8 Qd2 0-0 9 0-0-0 Nxd4 10 Bxd4 Be6 11 Kbl Qc7 12 Nd5 Bxd5 13 ed Rac8 14 Rcl a6 15 h4 e5 16 de fe 17 g4 e5 18 Be3 Qc6 19 Be2 Nd5 20 h5 Nxe3 21 Qxe3 Qc5 22 Q b3+ d5 23 hg hg 24 Rcdl Rfd8 25 Bd3 Rc6 26 Be4! Rb6 27 Rxd5 Rxd5 28 Qxd5+ Qxd5 29 Bxd5+ Kf8 30 b3 a5 31 a3 Rb5 32 Be4 g5 33 Rdl Ke7 34 Bf5 Bf6 35 Rd7+ Kf8 36 Be4 b6 37 Bd3 Rc5 38 Rd6 (l-0)

Paul Whitehead (2403) - Renard Anderson (2138) KIR

l e4 c6 2 d3 e5 3 g3 d5 4 Nd2 Nf6 5 Bg2 Be6 6 Ngf3 Nbd7 7 0-0 h6 8 Qe2 Bd6 9 b3 0-0 10 Bb2 Qc7 11 Rfel d4

Pressure on the e-pawn has forced this advance. Now White breaks up this spearhead, forcing Black to shift to a strategy for which he is ill-prepared: control of d4. Almost miraculously, White ends up controlling it!

12 c3! dc 13 Bxc3 c5 14 Nh4 g6 15 Nc4 Bxc4 16 bc! Rfe8 17 Rfl Rad8 18 Bh3 Nh7 19 Qe3 Bf8 20 f4 Bg7 21 Qe2 Nb8 22 Ng2 Nc6 23 Ne3 Nd4 24 Bxd4 cd 25 Nd5 Qc6 26 Qf2 ef 27 gf Nf6 28 Nxf6+ Bxf6 29 e5 Bg7 30 Bg2 Qd7 31 Bd5 K h8 32 Rael Bf8 33 Qxd4 b6?? 34 e6+ (l-0)

Perry Youngworth - William Abbott Nimzoindian

l d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 c5 5 Bd3 0-0 6 Ne2 Nc6 7 0-0 d5 8 a3 cd 9 ed dc 10 Bxc4 Ba5 11 Bg5 Bb6 12 d5 Ne5 13 Ba2 h6 14 Bf4 Ng6 15 de Bxe6 16 Bxe6 fe 17 Bg3 Nh5 18 Na4 Nxg3 19 hg Rc8 20 Qb3 Rc6 21 Nxb6 Rxb6 22 Q c2 Qf6 23 Nc3 Ne7 24 Radl Nf5 25 Na4 Rc6 26 Qe4 Rfc8 27 Nc3 a6 28 Rfel R8c7 29 Qe5 Kf7 30 g4 Ne7 31 Qh5+ N g6 32 Ne4 Qxb2 33 Nd6+ Ke7 34 Qxg6 Rxd6 35 Rxd6 Kxd6 36 Qxe6+ Kc5 37 Re5+ (l-0)

And now, with the contenders' games in, we come to the part where I put in the games I "couldn't leave out". This one, for its cute repeated "desperado" episodes with the bishops.

Perry Sill (2163) - Jon Frankle (2348) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 f4 e6 4 Nf3 d5 5 Bb5 Ne7 6 ed Nxd5 7 0-0 Be7 8 Ne5 Qc7 9 Qf3 0-0 10 Nxc6 bc 11 Bc4 Nb6 12 d3 Nxc4 13 dc Bf6 14 Be3 Ba6 15 Bxc5 Bxc4 16 Bxf8 Bxf1 17 Bc5 Bc4 18 b3 Bd5 19 Qe3 Bxc3 20 Qxc3 Qxf4 21 Rd1 Bxg2! 22 Bxa7 Bd5 23 Qd4 Qf3 24 Rd2 Qh1+ 25 Kf2 Qxh2+ (0-1)

This one, because it's just so old-fashioned good.

Dan Coleman (1914) - Steven Cross (2196) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 c3 Nf6 3 e5 Nd5 4 d4 cd 5 Qxd4 e6 6 Bc4 Nc6 7 Qe4 Nb6 8 Bd3 d5 9 Qe2 Be7 10 Nf3 0-0!?

Position after 10 ..0-0

Is it too early to castle? White's ruthlessly prosecuted attack, from the diagrammed position, certainly makes it seem so!

11 h4 h6 12 g4! f6 13 g5 fg 14 hg Rxf3 15 gh! Rf5 16 hg Rxe5 17 Be3 Bh4 18 Qg4! Rxe3+ 19 Kf1 Ne5 20 Bh7+!

That does it: three pieces up, Black gets mated. (1-0)

And this one, because I haven't seen this much fur flying on one board in a long while.

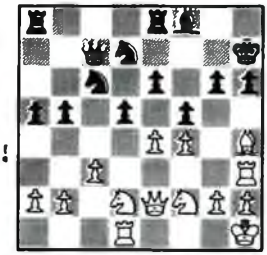
IM Kamran Shirazi (2525) - William Duckworth (2159) Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6

The Dragon Sicilian and Shirazi - a combination guaranteed to produce fireworks!

6 Be2 Bg7 7 Bg5 0-0 8 0-0 Nc6 9 Nb3 Be6 10 Kh1 Qc8 11 f4 h6 12 Bh4 Bg4 13 Nd5 Bxe2 14 Qxe2 Re8 15 c3 Nd7 16 Rad1 e6 17 Ne3 Qc7 18 Rd3 b5 19 Rfd1 Bf8 20 Ng4 a5 21 Nd2 f5 22 Nf2 Kh7 23 Rh3 d5

(Diagram)



Position after 23..d5

Faced with what has to be a crushing attack upon his weakened kingside, Black - somewhat belatedly - tries to distract White by means of a counterattack in the center. Nothing doing!

24 Bg5! de 25 Ndxe4! fe 26 Nxe4

Threatening 27 Rxd7!

26 ... Ncb8 27 Qxb5

Now the threat is 28 Bxh6 Bxh6 29 Qg5.

27 ... Kg8 28 Bxh6 Re7 29 Qg5 Bxh6 30 Qxe7 Qxf4 31 Rxh6! Qxh6 32 Nf6+ Kh8 33 Qxe6 (1-0)

Black's still a piece up, but the threat of 34 Qg8# is too horrible to contemplate - and so is the defense 33..Nxf6 34 Qxf6+ Kg8 35 Rd8+, etc.

And finally, to close out the Round, an example of the resurgent form of Bob Sulman, the Hero of Atlanta.

Robert Sulman (2312) - Mark Orfalea (2153) English

1 g3 e5 2 Bg2 f5 3 d3 Nf6 4 Nf3 d6 5 c4 Nc6 6 Nc3 g6 7 0-0 Bg7 8 Rb1 0-0 9 b4 h6 10 b5 Ne7 11 Ne1 g5 12 Nc2 Rb8 13 Nb4 Bd7 14 Qb3 Kh8 15 Qa3 f4 16 Qxa7 Qe8 17 Nbd5 Nexd5 18 Nxd5 Nxd5 19 Bxd5 Bh3 20 Bg2 Qh5 21 f3 g4 22 Qf2! Bf6 23 Bxh3 Qxh3 24 Qg2 Rg8 25 Qxh3 gh 26 Kf2 Bg5 27 e3 Ra8 28 ef ef 29 Bb2+ Kh7 30 a3 h5 31 Rh1 Kg6 32 Rbe1 Kf5 33 Rhg1 Bf6 34 Bxf6 Kxf6 35 Re4 fg+ 36 Rxg3 Rxg3 37 Kxg3 Rxa3 38 Rd4 Ke5 39 Rd5+ Ke6 40 f4 Ra1 41 Kxh3 Rf1 42 Kg3 h4+ 43 Kg4 Rf2 44 h3 c6 45 bc bc 46 Rd4 c5 47 f5+ Rxf5 48 Rxd6+ Kxd6 49 Kxf5 (1-0)

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Round Twelve

Christiansen ½ deFirmian

The draw here was predicated, I suspect, more on practicality than on the position reached on the board. Both players had 9½, as did Meyer; drawing their game meant that only Meyer could pass them for first - something he was not likely to do, having the Black pieces against his third successive titled player. So the game wasn't too exciting, and is presented here solely for the record.

GM Larry Christiansen - IM Nick deFirmian Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 d6 3 g3 Nc6 4 Bg2 g6 5 d3 Bg7 6 Be3 e5 7 Nh3 Nge7 8 f4 0-0 9 0-0 ef 10 Nxf4 Rb8 11 a3 b5 12 Rb1 a5 13 Ncd5 b4 14 ab ab 15 Rf2 Ne5 16 Nxe7+ Qxe7 17 h3 Bb7 18 c3 Ba8 19 Ra1 Kh8 20 Qe2 bc (½-½)

Final Position

Last round, top board

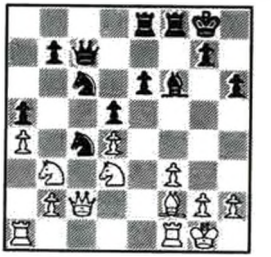
Biyiasas (9) ½ J Meyer (9½)

One might perhaps have expected the GM, playing White, to put forth some sort of last-ditch effort to vault himself into the first-place tie shaping up at 10 pts. But Peter is, above all else, a safe player; and when his typically slow, patient

opening showed signs of getting bogged down, he had no objections to splitting the point - after all, half a point is still better than none! (As it turned out, about $250 better ...)

GM Peter Biyiasas - John Meyer Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Bd7 4 Bxd7+ Qxd7 5 0-0 e6 6 c3 Nf6 7 Qe2 Nc6 8 d4 cd 9 cd d5 10 e5 Ne4 11 Be3 Be7 12 Nel h6 13 Nd3 0-0 14 f3 Ng5 15 Nd2 f6 16 ef Bxf6 17 Nb3 Rae8 18 Qd2 Nf7 19 Nbc5 Qc8 20 Nb3 Nd6 21 Bf2 Nc4 22 Qe2 a5 23 a4 Qc7 24 Qc2 ($\frac{1}{2}$-$\frac{1}{2}$)



Final Position

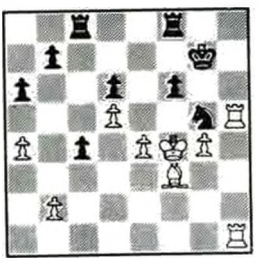
If anything, it is Black who stands slightly more comfortably here.

Gurevich (9) 0 Gheorghiu (9)

The New Yorker came out swinging, with a hyper-aggressive treatment of the Benoni (ten pawn moves out of his first fourteen!). The Rumanian GM blunted, then quenched the attack by repeated trades, leaving White overextended and weak for the endgame. Even so, White hung on grimly, forcing Black to summon all his technical skill to bring home the point.

Dmitri Gurevich - GM Florin Gheorghiu Benoni

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 d6 4 Nc3 g6 5 e4 Bg7 6 f4 0-0 7 Nf3 a6 8 a4 e6 9 Be2 ed 10 cd Bg4 11 h3 Bxf3 12 Bxf3 Nbd7 13 g4 h6 14 h4 Nh7 15 Kf2 c4 16 Be3 Rc8 17 Bd4 Nc5 18 Bxg7 Nd3+ 19 K g3 Kxg7 20 Qd2 g5 21 Ne2 Qf6 22 hg hg 23 Rh5 gf+ 24 Nxf4 Qxf4+ 25 Qxf4 Nxf4 26 Kxf4 f6 27 Rahl Ng5 (Diagram)



Position after 27 .. Ng5

If White doesn't come up with something, this has the makings of a classic endgame - for his opponent to play and win. Thus, the following pawn sac is less desperation than survival.

28 e5!? de+ 29 Kf5! c3!

The bishop's immune: after 29..Nxf3? 30 Rh8+ Kf7 31 Rlh7+ Ke8 32 Rxf8+ Kxf8 33 Rh8+ and 34 Rxc8, White would come out the exchange up.

30 Rh6 c2 31 d6 clQ 32 Rg6+ Kf7 33 Rxcl Nxf3 34 Rxf6+ Kg7 35 Rxf8 Rxf8 36 Ke6 e4 37 Rc7+ Kg6 38 Re7 Ng5+ 39 Kd5 Rf2 40 Rxb7 Rd2+ 41 Kc6 Kf6 42 Re7 Rxb2 43 Re8 Rc2+ 44 Kb6 Ne6 45 g5+ Kf5 46 g6 Rd2 47 Kc6 Rc2+ 48 Kd7 Nc5+ 49 Ke7 Kxg6 50 Rc8 e3 51 d7, but (0-1), for after 51 ... e2 52 d8Q elQ+ 53 Kd6 Nb7+ wins the new-made queen.

And the last of the 9-pointers:

Silman (9) 1 Gogel (9)

Not much to tell about this game. Polugaevsky's line against the King's Indian has been known to be a powerful weapon for White for nearly a decade; Black came up with nothing new to meet it, and went down to defeat.

Jeremy Silman - Dennis Gogel King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 dδ 5 Be2 0-0 6 Bg5 c5 7 d5 e6 8 Qd2 ed 9 ed Re8 10 Nf3 Bg4 11 0-0 Nbd7 12 h3 Bxf3 13 Bx f3 a6 14 a4 b6 15 Rael Rxel 16 Rxel Qf8 17 Bdl h6 18 Be3 Rb8 19 Be2 Ne8 20 f4 Nc7 21 Bd3 Re8 22 Bf2 f5 23 Rbl a5 24 g4 Qf6 25 gf gf 26 Ne2 Qg6+ 27 Ng3 Rf8 28 Kh2 Ne8 29 Rgl Qh7 30 Qe2 (1-0)

The queen invades at e6 or e7, with fatal results.

Thus, a five-way tie for first ensued, something not seen since - well, since the seven-way tie at the 1973 Open, in Chicago. While the winners were counting their shekels, however, there was still plenty of action on the lower boards.

Richard Lobo - GM James Tarjan English

1 c4 c5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nc3 d5 4 cd Nxd5 5 g3 Nc6 6 Bg2 Nc7 7 0-0 e5 8 d3 Be7 9 Nd2 Bd7 10 Nc4 0-0 11 f4

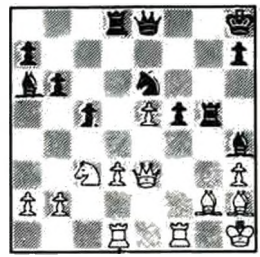
For the consequences of accepting the gambit - 11 Bxc6 Bxc6

12 Nxe5 Be8 - see Frumkin-Savereide (Round 3).

11 ... ef 12 gf f5 13 Be3 Rb8 14 Rc1 Kh8 15 Qe1 Rf6 16 Qf2 b6 17 Kh1 Re6 18 Ne5 Nxe5 19 fe Rg6 20 Bf4 Ne6 21 e3 Bh4 22 Q d2 Qe8 23 Qe2 Rd8 24 Rcd1 Bc8 25 h3 Ba6 26 Bh2 Rg5 27 e4 g6 28 ef gf 29 Qe3 (Diagram)

White has obviously been dithering; now Black uncorks:

29 ... Rxg2! 30 Kxg2 Bb7+ 31 Rf3 Nd4 32 Rdf1 Qg6+ 33 K h1 Rg8 (0-1)



Position after 29 Qe3

Paul Whitehead - IM Sergey Kudrin Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 g3 Nc6 7 Nde2

The Soltis Anti-Dragon line - see his Round 2 game for further reference.

7 ... Bg7 8 Bg2 0-0 9 0-0 Bd7 10 h3 Rc8 11 g4 Na5 12 a4 a6 13 Ng3 b5 14 ab ab 15 e5!?

While tactically sound - 15..de? 16 g5, followed by 17 Rxa5 - this blow is aimed in the wrong direction. White's 10 h3 and 11 g4 have oriented him for a kingside attack, not a center break. When his first wave is spent, Black will rule.

15 ... Ne8 16 Re1 Nc4 17 ed Nexd6 18 Nd5 e6 19 Nb4 Qc7 20 c3 h6 21 Ra6 Rcd8 22 Nc6 Bxc6 23 Rxc6 Qa7 24 Qe2 Rc8 25 Rxc8 Rxc8 26 Rd1 Qa2 27 Bf4 Bf8 28 Ne4

Sensing that the tide is beginning to turn, White gathers himself for a last desperate sacrificial try.

28 ... Nxe4 29 Bxe4 Qxb2 30 Qd3 Bg7 31 Bxg6?! fg 32 Qxg6 Rf8 33 Qxe6+ Kh8 34 Bg3 Qxc3 35 Rd5 b4 36 Rc5 b3! 37 Rx c4 b2 38 Rxc3 b1Q+ 39 Kg2 Bxc3 40 Qxh6+ Kg8 41 Qe6+ Kh7 42 Bd6 Qb7+ 43 Kg1 Rf6 44 Qe8 Rxd6 (0-1)

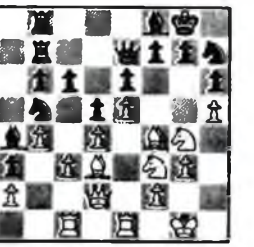
Knocked out of contention for 1st, GM Soltis fought on anyway.

GM Andrew Soltis - Perry Youngworth K-Indian Reversed

1 e4 c6 2 d3 d5 3 Nd2 e6 4 g3 Nf6 5 Bg2 Be7 6 Ngf3 0-0 7 0-0 a5 8 Rel a4 9 e5 Nfd7 10 Nfl a3 11 b3 Re8 12 h4 Nf8 13 Nlh2 h6

A kingside weakening! White sets his sights upon it, and eventually turns it to account.

14 Ng4 Nh7 15 Bf4 Bf8 16 d4 b6 17 Qd2 Ba6 18 Racl Ra7 19 Radl Rd7 20 b4 Bc4 21 Ne3 Bb5 22 h5 Na6 23 Rbl Qe7 24 c3 Ba4 25 Rbcl Nc7 26 Bfl Nb5 27 Bd3 Rb8
28 Ng4 Rdb7 (Diagram)



Position after ..Rdb7

Now the storm breaks.

29 Bxh6! gh 30 Bxh7+ Kxh7 31 Nf6+ Kh8 32 Qd3 Qxf6

Desperation, of course. Black soon comes to his senses.

33 ef c5 34 bc bc 35 dc Nc7 36 Ne5 (1-0)

There were some laughers this round, too.

FM Doug Root - Boris Siff Goring Gambit Declined

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 ed 4 c3 d3 5 Bxd3 d6 6 h3 Ne5?!

Out of the books - and into trouble.

7 0-0 Nxd3 8 Qxd3 Be7 9 Bf4 Nf6 10 c4 Nd7 11 Nc3 Bf6 12 Radl Bxc3?! 13 Qxc3 f6 14 Nd4 Kf7 15 b4 Qe7 16 c5! dc 17 Qb3+ Kg6 18 Nf5 Qxe4 19 Nh4+ (1-0)

And the occasional heartbreaker :

William Batchelder - Mike Brooks King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 Be3 Nc6 7 Nge2 Rb8 8 Qd2 a6 9 Rbl b5 10 cb ab 11 b4 Bd7 12 g3 Re8 13 Bg2 e5 14 d5 Ne7 15 Ncl c6 16 0-0 cd 17 ed Nf5 18 Bf2 Bh6 19 Qd3 Nd4!

20 Nb3 Bf5 21 Ne4 Nxb3 22 Rxb3 Nxe4 23 fe Bd7 24 Be3 Bxe3+ 25 Qxe3 Rc8 26 Qh6! Rf8

The threat was 27 Rxf7!

27 Rc1 Qb6+ 28 Kh1 Qd4 29 h3 Rxc1+ 30 Qxc1 Rc8 31 Qe3 Qa1+ 32 Kh2 Rc2 33 Ra3 Qb2 34 Ra8+ Kg7 35 Qf3?

35 Qg1 is forced, after which Black's superiority is obvious, but there is no immediate win.

35 ... Rf2 (0-1)

And John Grefe completed his fall from grace, shot down by a refurbished old weapon.

IM John Grefe - Robert Rowley Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Nxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Bb3 d5 8 de Be6 9 c3 Bc5 10 Nbd2 0-0 11 Bc2 Nxf2!?

This, the Dilworth Attack, was used by no less than Botvinnik, but has fallen - perhaps undeservedly - into disrepute.

12 Rxf2 f6 13 ef Bxf2+ 14 Kxf2 Qxf6 15 Kg1 Rae8 16 Nf1 Ne5 17 B e3 Nxf3+ 18 Qxf3 Qxf3 19 gf Rxf3 20 Bd4 Bh3

Certainly, an endgame like this against the "Spanish Torture" is nothing for Black to complain about!

21 Ng3 g6 22 a4 Kf7 23 ab ab 24 Bb3 c6 25 Ra7+ Kg8 26 Bf2 Ref8 27 Ne4 R8f4 28 Ra8+ Kg7 29 Ra7+ Kh6 30 Bd1 de 31 Bxf3 Rxf3 32 Re7 Bf5 33 Kg2 Rd3 34 Bd4 Rf3 35 h4 Rd3 36 b4 Kh5!

The usual solution to the winning problem in all endgames: activate your pieces, especially the king.

37 Rxh7+ Kg4 38 h5 Rd2+ 39 Kg1 gh 40 Rg7+ Kf4 41 Rc7 e3 42 Rxc6 Rd1+ 43 Kh2 Rxd4! 44 cd e2 45 Rc1 Ke3 46 Ra1 Kf2 47 Ra2 Kf1 48 Rxe2 Kxe2 49 Kg3 Ke3 (0-1)

And Karl Burger lost rather horribly to Doug McClintock, allowing the latter to round out the list of $9\frac{1}{2}$-pointers. Some well-respected names were among the 9-pointers, headed by

The Old Campaigner himself, Art Bisguier.

GM Arthur Bisguier - Tom Algeo French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Ne2 de 5 a3 Be7 6 Nxe4 Nf6 7 Qd3

I suspect Arthur is not playing this line because it is currently fashionable, but because there isn't very much analysis out on it yet.

7 ... b6 8 Bf4 Bb7 9 N2c3 Nc6 10 0-0-0 Qd7 11 Nxf6+ Bxf6 12 d5!

One advantage to this line: White gets quick development.

12 ... Nd4 13 Qe4 0-0 14 de! Qc8 15 ef+ Rxf7 16 Nd5 Kh8 17 B d3 Qg8 18 Be3 Bxd5 19 Qxd5 Rd8 20 Qa2 Qf8 21 c3 Nc6 22 Bb5 Ne5 23 Rxd8 Bxd8 24 Rdl Be7 25 Qe6 Bd6 26 h3 Re7 27 Qb3 Ng6 28 Qa4 Nf4 29 Bc6 Qf5 30 Rxd6! Ne2+ 31 Kd2 cd 32 Kxe2 Qbl 33 Qb3 (1-0), most likely by flagfall.

Last on tiebreak, but certainly not on performance, was that CM we alluded to earlier, Richard Dost. His final effort was the following smooth performance.

Elliott Winslow - Richard Dost French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 de 4 Nxe4 Bd7 5 Nf3 Bc6 6 Bd3 Nd7 7 0-0 Ngf6 8 Ng3 Bxf3!? 9 Qxf3 c6

Students of the openings will recognize this formation as one frequently occurring in the Center Counter. Giving up the pair of bishops for easy development and a solid position, Black waits for White to overextend himself.

10 Rel Be7 11 c4 Qb6 12 Qf4 0-0 13 Re2 c5 14 Be3 Rfd8 15 Rael Nf8 16 dc Bxc5 17 Bxc5 Qxc5 18 Rd2 Rd7 19 Redl e5

Black bounces back - White has indeed overextended. His center has collapsed; but after this, even, White is still hard put to defend the shadow! Ultimately, the d-file pin proves his undoing.

20 Ne4!? Nxe4 21 Qxe4 Rad8 22 Kfl g6 23 a3 f5 24 Qel Qa5

25 f3 Rd4 26 Ke2 Ne6 27 g3 e4 28 fe fe 29 Bbl

The pin is broken at last, but now Black has a winning attack against the exposed White king.

29 ... Qh5+ 30 Kfl Qf3+ 31 Kgl Ng5 32 h4 Qxdl+! 33 Qxdl Rx d2 34 Qa4 Nf3+ 35 Kfl Rdl+ 36 Ke2 Rel+ (0-1)

One move before mate.

Here's a position you won't believe:

Position after 22..b5

And here's the game that produced it.

G Delacruz - Bill Chesney QP Game

1 d4 Nf6 2 Bf4 e6 3 Nf3 c5 4 c3 Nc6 5 Nbd2 cd 6 cd Qb6 7 Nb3 Bb4+ 8 Bd2 a5 9 e3 a4 10 Ncl d6 11 Bc3 a3 12 Qb3 Ne4 13 Bxb4 Nxb4 14 Be2 Bd7 15 ba Rxa3 16 Qb2 Qa5 17 0-0 0-0 18 Bc4 Rc8 19 Bb3 Nc3 20 Nd2 Bb5 21 Rel Bd3 22 h3 b5 - and there you have it: terminal congestion of the queenside! (0-1, 55)

***

Well, there it is/was: the US Open 1981, as reported by one who was there. If this doesn't convince you to spend your vacations at the Open, then at least I hope it provided you with a lot of good games, some stories - all in all, a pleasant hour or two among the moves. Any reader with questions, comments, brickbats, etc., should address them to The Author, as follows:

Jim Marfia
827 Baldwin
Royal Oak, MI
48067

A prize list and indexes on the following pages.
So long - it was fun!

See you in St Paul !

THE WINNERS

1st - 5th places	GM Florin Gheorghiu (T), GM Larry Christiansen, Jeremy Silman, IM Nick deFirmian, John C Meyer	10-2	$1850
6th - 13th places	GM James Tarjan, IM Sergey Kudrin, GM Peter Biyiasas, GM Andrew Soltis, FM Douglas Root, Michael Brooks, Robert Rowley III, Douglas McClintock	$9\frac{1}{2}$	256.25
Candidate Master	Richard Dost (T)	9-3	550
2nd-8th	David Weldon, Bill Chesney, Paul Zeigler, Robert Anderson, H Edward Syrett, Arthur Wang, Peter Hess	$8\frac{1}{2}$	64.28
Category I	Robert Bryan (T)	$8\frac{1}{2}$-$3\frac{1}{2}$	500
2nd - 3rd	Duffy Hepner, Boris Popov	8	187.50
Category II	Matthew Ng (T)	$7\frac{1}{2}$-$4\frac{1}{2}$	375
2nd	David Cheyney	$7\frac{1}{2}$	
3rd - 6th	Mark Shulman, William Greer, Tyler Johnson, Donald Gordon	7	31.25
Category III	Olga Higgins (T)	7 - 5	500
2nd - 3rd	Martin Bradshaw, Todd Rumph	$6\frac{1}{2}$	187.50
Category IV	Hilda Acevedo (T)	$6\frac{1}{2}$-$5\frac{1}{2}$	500
2nd	John Howard	6	250
3rd - 8th	Melvin Nelson, Jr, K C Holmes, Robert Cooper, Robert Peterson, Mark Ryan, John Katronis	5	20.84
Category V	Stella Monday (T)	$3\frac{1}{2}$-$8\frac{1}{2}$	300
2nd	Ken Webb	3	150
3rd - 5th	Denise Mowery, Tony Hirano, Matt Haws	$2\frac{1}{2}$	25

Category VI was not awarded

Unrated went to Eduardo Gastelu - (T) + $75, and Geoffrey Strayer - $75, with 7 and $6\frac{1}{2}$ points.

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